

# SPY

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Sharpton in  
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December 1994

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November/December 1994 Volume 8, No. 8



## Features

### The Asphalt Jungle Book

People tend to pick on the taxis, the muggers, the smog, and the outrageous cost of living, but SPY goes undercover to dig up the things about city living that *really* get under our skin.....**44**

### I Do Solemnly Swear I Use These Products

Would billion-dollar corporations be crazy enough to attempt to buy a piece of President Clinton from two SPY writers posing as high-level marketing consultants to the White House? Quicker than you can say "Snapple." **Peter Huyck** and **Alexander Gregory** expose the greed, cynicism, and shocking stupidity within some of America's most respected businesses.....**52**



### Hey, Hey, Hey—It's Fat Al Sharpton in the Heart of Darkness

Their country ravaged by overpopulation, famine, and genocide, the Rwandans have pleaded for help from the United States. What they got was Al Sharpton. **Andrew Cohen** goes on location with the pugnacious pompadoured preacher himself.....**64**

### Diplomatic Inanity

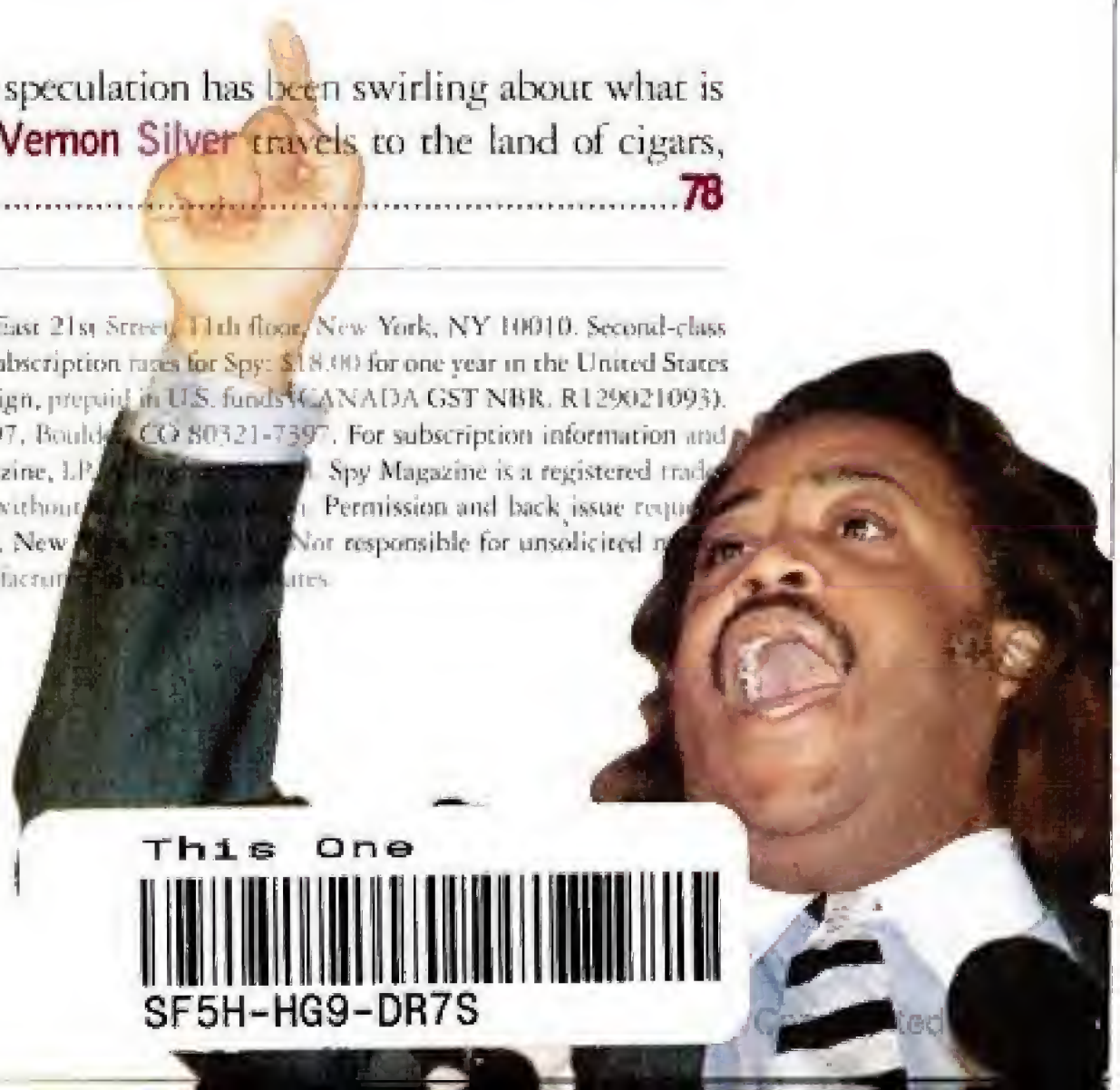
It's the biggest international joke this side of EuroDisney. But as **Lance Gould** found out, the United Nations takes itself very, very seriously.....**70**

### Havana Can Wait

With the hordes of refugees floating toward Florida, speculation has been swirling about what is actually going on in Cuba. Veteran correspondent **Vernon Silver** travels to the land of cigars, sugar, and midget chickens to investigate.....**78**



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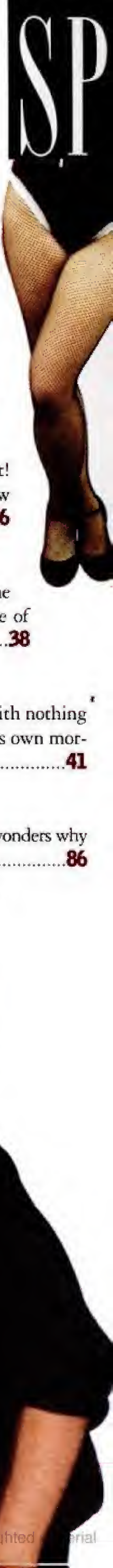


This One



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## Columns

### Magazine Heaven

Letter from a young Si Newhouse, Tina's brown-nosing, and much, much more—all in **Pam Hunter's** third installment.....**34**

### Culture

Hey, check out this Duran Duran album—it's phat! Forget the seventies, **Jared Paul Stern** shows how the eighties are booming again.....**36**

### Ethics, Inc.

To trade or not to trade? **David Shenk** examines the Faustian dealings between U.S. industry and some of our more favored nations.....**38**

### Fear

Hurtling toward an almost certain death, armed with nothing but a quart of clams, **Ellis Weiner** wrestles with his own mortality—and wins!.....**41**

### Letter From Canada

From her home in British Columbia, **Susan Baxter** wonders why America has lost its sense of humor.....**86**

Cover photo: Pat Harbron; Computer imaging: Alan Boucek; Stylist: Clara Ronk



## Departments

### Great Expectations

An open letter to Fidel.....**6**

Letters to Spy.....**8**

### Naked City

D'Amato and Gotti: birds of a feather?; Boardroom bebop; Whitewater follies; Sheen and Sheedy put pen to paper; Separated at Birth; Fruits of scandal; James Dean poses; Rare Diseases; Tarantino talks turkey; A SPY talent search; Bret Ellis regurgitates in public; Take-out trouble; SPY's police blotter; Howie's books; Stolen style sheets; Fisting Margaret Cho; Richie Rich meets Pig Pen; *Newsweek* gets chic.....**14**

Party Poop.....**92**

### The Millennium Approaches

The population problem solved.....**96**





Enough said.



Just being the best is enough.



# An Open Letter to Fidel Castro

Dearest Fidel,

Please don't kill the photographer. There, we've said it in print. No picture—not even a shot of you leering at a couple of nubile young Marxist go-go dancers at a recent opening of the kind of nightclub you abolished back in '59—is worth the price of a human life.

We know that after the *Miami Herald* published the infamous shot, you ordered the negative to be destroyed and the image was removed from AP wires across the United States. In fact, we had to go all the way to Canada to get the damn thing. But, once in hand, we worried that the photographer—now living in Cuba and probably wishing he'd left the lens cap on—might be, well, punished for daring to catch you in a rare moment of bourgeois revelry.

Fidel, *nuestro amigo*, those halcyon days of totalitarian dictatorship are in their twilight. In the digital age, information is nigh impossible to suppress, and your fellow despots will be



the first to tell you that nobody, but nobody, is untouchable anymore. After all, if New York City's mayor, police commissioner, district attorney, and city council speaker can have their cellular-phone ID numbers pilfered—along with those of New York's FBI boss, the FBI's national security director, and an FBI spokesman—how can you hope to remain so unscathed? "I have a hard enough time remembering phone numbers," grouched commissioner William Bratton.

Consider the example of a fellow president—a moral man, a decent man—who rules over a domain only a little smaller than yours. We speak of Steve Florio, he of Condé Nast, the opulent, cushioned citadel of publishing power and influence that is owned by one of the richest families in America. Impenetrable? Inaccessible, you say? We beg to differ. Information, it can be said, travels faster and with more stealth than a single-engine Cessna invading White House airspace.

Fact is, two mid-level members of our international investigative reporting unit, sporting disguises and phony Bronx accents, hand-delivered a large gift-wrapped wooden SPY sign to the private office, the very inner sanctum of *el Presidente* Florio. They passed three security checkpoints with no more credentials than a generic invoice that was purchased at an office-supply store. After tearing off the wrapping, our operatives pulled out a Kodak Fun Saver disposable camera and began snapping photos of Steve hurtling over his desk. But did this president blow his cool further, debasing himself by threatening, cajoling, or pleading for the camera?

Actually, yes. More than that, he offered the duo \$100 for it. Considering the generous salary a SPY staffer earns, they said what any honorable





journalist would have said: "Let's see the cash." But Steve balked and later saw the error of his ways. Phoning the SPY offices, he pretended to go along with the joke, in a perfect "Awww, I knew it all a time" cadence. He even invited the duo out for lunch (although later the invitation was reduced to "drinks," and ultimately rescinded altogether), and helped us out with our fact-checking: "I've lost 25 pounds, so you can't call me fat anymore."

Information, Fidel. Information.

We were, in fact, appalled to hear that a few narrow-minded pundits had dismissed our clandestine expedition as a "prank"—a sophomoric stab at self-promotion done for Page Six of the *New York Post*. But that is hardly the case. It was intended to be a political statement, on the order of Tiananmen Square, and we were willing to sacrifice the lives of two young writers to make it. But more importantly, *We did it to prove a point to you!* Fidel, our hirsute Latin-American friend, no person—no matter how powerful—should be shielded from the truth. And no truth shall be shielded from a public that desires it—regardless of the messenger who carries it.

Witness USAir's five-week "Fearful Flyers" program. The company says it is "designed to help people who are afraid to fly become comfortable flyers." Cost: \$325—including a one-hour "graduation flight."

Or take the photo of Prince Charles vacationing in the buff that appeared in the German newspaper *Bild*. If the future King of England cannot stop the publication of such a shot, and if he cannot keep *Newsweek* from reprinting it in the interest of news (or, rather, reporting on reportage), how can you, the aging lord of a crumbling banana republic, possibly think that you can halt the traffic on the global information highway?

Fidel, take some time to think this over. Sit back, smoke a cigar, sip some domestic rum, and maybe chew on a little sugarcane. You don't have to decide right away. Maybe you can look at this whole photographic snafu as a learning experience, and begin to turn over a new leaf. Perhaps—and this is just a suggestion—it's time for you and the remaining ratters of the Evil Empire to lighten up. Maybe what Cuba needs is a leader who can unhook his ammo belt, kick off his jungle boots, and get up and boogie his socioeconomic cares away. We could even invite the go-go dancers to join you.

Now that would be one hell of a photo op. ☺



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## From the SPY Mailroom

**Magazine people**, someone once said, have ink in their blood. Or maybe it was newspaper people, and maybe it wasn't ink at all but some foreign, mutant bacteria. Then again, perhaps we're just thinking of *The Andromeda Strain*. Whichever, the fact is, it isn't true. If you cut us, especially with our own cheap, smelly paper, do we not bleed?

Over the years, we have developed a pretty thick skin (the paper cuts have become less impressive), but, like anyone else, we appreciate a little positive reinforcement, a little constructive criticism from our readers. Like Jamie Rosen, of New York, New York, who writes: "Someone should file a trademark infringement case against your magazine. The SPY mark refers to a brilliantly funny New York monthly. For a few years now, the magazine bearing the nameplate 'SPY' has been violating this trademark. Please either stop publishing or call your magazine something else."

Well Mr. Rosen of New York, New York, starting with the very next issue, look for your copy of *JAMIE!*, the New York, New York bimonthly. Fact is, some guy named Malanowski has been hounding us for *years* to make this change—now there's no shutting him up.

**But let's get back** to the original subject—cheap, smelly paper. Frankly, we're a little worried. Too many of you clearly have no idea what to do when a major national magazine falls into your hands—you've been spending too much time *smelling* the damn thing and not enough time *reading* it. Our old buddy and unofficial SPY analyst Eli

## Dirty Laundry

**L**et's review what I've learned from the September/October issue of SPY: Vegas is schlock, Disney is schlock, stupid movies are stupid, Dan Quayle is stupid, whole life is a rip-off. This is sophistication?

So term life is a better deal than whole life. Next you'll be telling me that pro wrestling is fixed, or that Ronald Reagan isn't too bright. Worse, maybe you'll follow the lead of other magazines I used to subscribe to, like *Esquire* and *Playboy*, and include helpful thumb suckers on the four-in-hand vs. the Windsor, or how to tell if the dry cleaners really have the plant on the premises.

If this is sophistication, I'd rather hang out with machine operators who can listen to Carmen Miranda or whatever music they like without fucking apologizing for it.

Nick Walters  
Chicago, Illinois

*What are you saying, Nick? Pro wrestling is fixed?!*

**Y**es, I was worried. Not about having to patch together issues of the *National Lampoon*, *Review*, and *Enquirer* to satisfy my longing for celeb-bashing and scorched-earth humor, not even about my sudden lack of information on short-fingered vulgarities, bosomy dirty-book writers, or doughy old ass kissers.

I was worried you'd be back. Worried that you'd come back only to (as you said so piquantly of Bobby Fischer) "piss away a legend." Not that you were worried about me, but I'll continue to subscribe. Your near-death experience (like all proper near-death experiences) seems to have impressed upon you the things in life that truly matter. Like employer-mandated ice cream.

Peter Leferre  
Torrance, California

**I**knew it wasn't true from the start. Even making *Newsweek's* "Transition" column couldn't convince me. In fact, I'll never again believe that anyone who's listed as

dead in that column truly is. I just figured that because your "hiatus" seemed to correspond with the birth of my first child (Alexander L. Alpi, born 4/2/94) give or take a month, you were simply taking time off, perhaps to give birth yourselves to some precocious offspring of SPY, some sort of daring SPY equivalent of the *Kiplinger Letter*, or something.

Whatever. I'm very, very glad you're back. I didn't want to think my child would have to grow up in a world without SPY.

Deborah Alpi  
Pacifica, California

**T**wo issues into your revival and I've begun to notice an alarming increase in the number of photos of King Overbite himself, Si Newhouse. Is the man just in need of serious orthodontia overhaul or do the photographers keep catching him with his mouth full? Ever hear of BRACES, Si? Besides this annoying trend the magazine is better than ever.

Michael M. Maloney  
Harleysville, Pennsylvania

## Mouse of Representatives

**H**at's off to SPY magazine for uncovering the truth about the Disney/Bob Dornan axis working to take over America [*"Has Disney Taken Over America?"* by Paul Iorio, September/October]. And to think that Disney President Michael Eisner and I thought we had covered our tracks! Michael, if you read this, the jig is up, you can stop giving to liberal causes and liberal candidates.

Seriously, it is absurd to think that: a) The Disney Company is "Republican" or "conservative." I know many people at Disney and its culture is anything but conservative. b) Bob Dornan is Disney's hand-picked presidential candidate. If that were the case, why do all of Michael Eisner's political contributions go to liberal Democrats?

And let's face it, being called a "liar" by George Stephanopolous, he lately of "Whitewater ten" fame, is a little like



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# Letters to Spy

Messinger ["Letters," July/August] reiterated a popular thought: "Your paper STINKS. What is the deal?"

What is it with you guys, anyway? What do you think SPY is, ditto paper? Some junior high math quiz fresh off the mimeograph? Do you go to restaurants and smell the menus, or just eat the damn food? Do you actually smell your mail, sniff the morning paper, and inhale the fragrant nectar of your checkbooks? Well, cut it the hell out or we'll go ahead and run that scratch 'n' sniff map of the New Jersey Turnpike that's been sitting around here for months. Then you'll really have something to cry about!

**From the department** of erudite readers comes Lori Frankian of Indian Head Park, Illinois, who wrote, "I purchased your magazine for the first and last time. What the hell is it? I couldn't muster the patience to try and decipher your 'oh so cool lingo.' It wasn't even good reading material for the *crapper*. I think your magazine is a little too hip for its own good. It's absolute *crap!*"

*Hmmm.* Aside from the clearly scatological obsession, chickie baby, clearly you don't dig the beat. You're not pickin' up what we're puttin' down, you dig? Maybe you should take a tip from ultra-cool Larry Howes, of Springfield, Massachusetts, who, lamenting Malanowski's "disappearance" (JAMIE!), compares SPY to "Mencken's *American Mercury*. But remember well what happened to the *American Mercury* once Mencken was gone!"

Ouch! Cheap shot on that one, Lar. Fair is fair—but did you have to bring up *Mencken*?

Howes goes on to tell us, among other things, that SPY has "a rabid following of intelligent readers with a remarkable amount of good taste. After all, we *are* SPY readers, no?" He then confesses, "Although I don't have a TV myself..." and ends his

having your military record questioned by Bill Clinton.

Finally, it's a bit much to be compared to George Wallace when I marched with Martin Luther King. But the Road to Selma was never the road to Sodom.

Stupid? A joke? Infantile? Or just plain sloppy (I represent Disneyland, not Disney World)? I can't decide which description best fits the Disney/Dornan article. Oh what the heck. I'm feeling generous. I'll go with all of them.

Robert K. Dornan  
U.S. Congressman

P.S. Surprise, surprise, another liberal hit-piece. But as your reporter, Paul Iorio, admitted to me on the phone, just about every person commenting on me in your story is a liberal Democrat except, of course, James McKay, who denies the quote attributed to him. For example, Iorio said that liberal Professor Fitzgerald "would not comment on Dornan's performance as a student." But how could he? I never had him for a teacher. This is typical of all Iorio's "sources."

*SPY regrets the error that has Dornan representing Disney World instead of Disneyland. Paul Iorio responds to the congressman's other comments:*

1. Dornan writes, "As your reporter admitted to me on the phone..." In fact, the opposite is true. My tapes of our conversation prove I did not say that. The story was deliberately written from the perspective of his supporters so I could show their ambivalence about him.
2. James McKay's quotation is on tape.
3. Professor Fitzgerald says explicitly and unambiguously on tape and on the record that he taught Dornan in two political science courses at Loyola. Furthermore, Dornan didn't deny that fact when I asked him about it in a taped interview.

**A**s further proof of how "Disneyfication" is sweeping not just the country, but the world, consider the tour of the demilitarized zone between South Korea and North Korea that the U.S.O. offers.

As part of the fun, you go into a meeting house that's half-in, half-out of North Korean territory, where politicians from both sides gather for talks. When you reach the side that's in North Korea, scowling guards defending their side of the building from the outside immediately come up to the windows, like zombies in *Night of the Living Dead*, and pose for

photos. For thrills, this even tops the phantoms that sit beside you on Disney's "Haunted Castle" ride.

Bob Casbill  
Randolph, New Jersey

## Font of Wisdom

**S**urely you recognized the "Orator" font Liz Smith used in her letter [September/October]. It was designed to be read as easily as possible by the most vision-impaired under the least favorable conditions. Not to needlessly defend Liz, but she obviously took the trouble to sit down and put her own words on paper rather than hand them over to secretaries for endless word-processing. This fact alone would indicate some affection for her correspondents at SPY, a sentiment that has hardly been reciprocated over the long course of the magazine's publication.

I take heart that a syndicated columnist working for 60 family newspapers will unashamedly use a mechanical typewriter for personal business correspondence in this day and age.

Chris O'Neil  
Long Island City, New York

**I** have been a SPY reader for several years now, and I know how you tend to rip apart the people who write in. Even so, I have decided to write, and for a completely selfish reason. Tell me who Celia Brady is. Please. I won't tell anyone else. Promise. I live in Tennessee for heaven's sakes! Who would I tell that would even know what I was talking about?

You've been holding this secret for far too long. We would both feel a lot better if you told me.

James C. Long  
Bulls Gap, TN

*You're right, James. We've been dying to get this off our chest. Celia Br—bey, wait a minute! Your letter may not be in the easy-to-read Orator type, but you can't fool us. Nice try, Liz.*

## How About Sinatra Under Glass?

**M**ark Ebner's account of the diabolical and family-oriented change in Las Vegas ["Smoke and Mirrors in Vegas," September/October] was expertly done. When I moved eastward I took with me the memory of a Vegas rooted in its vulgar glitz



and bowling-alley architecture. It was the place one went to see only the most legendary and outdated "entertainers" in "the business." The entertainment was in the idea of going out in that famous desert town and doing every base thing that had been done before in the search for excitement, not in the stage shows or attractions.

Ebner perfectly captured the sick feeling I had when my relatives showed me the brochures that had them considering Las Vegas as an alternative to Disney World. It confirmed the confusion I felt reading about people who went to Vegas for the sole purpose of seeing Streisand simply sing in a giant plastic pyramid.

Joe Cope  
Brookhead, KY

## Other Voices, Other Letters

**A**s fellow Mensan of Shane Black's sibling and Zombie dramatist Terance Timothy Black, I will not acquiesce to SPY's pissant deprecation of this man, this paradigm, this steadfast force of nature forever risen above the loathsome dominion of Clinton night basketball ["Shane Black Script-O-Matic," September/October]. Terry and I, deeply immersed in debating the biomechanical intricacies of the undead, often spontaneously pause to whisper "Shane." You would sully that? Anathema!

I look at SPY resurrected only to see ulcerous crimson pustules erupting from thick folds of cheesy white dermis ooze a clotted yellow pus perfumed with cloying sweetness of rotted flesh, your wet red fists clenching a gunny sack bulging with twisted souls, your tongues squirming over clenched teeth and growing more bloody and more diseased as you chant a rasping threnody of Hell. This is why I subscribe. Do try to maintain standards.

Alan M. Schwartz  
Irvine, California

**I** just read your J.B.K.O. installment in the new issue of SPY [by Alexandra Rushfield, September/October] and was amazed—no, flabbergasted! In fact, I think I've fallen head over heels in love with you, Alexandra. I saw that thumbnail photo of you and butterflies started tapping around the inside of my stomach. (The condition later turned much worse and I lost it on a friend's hardwood floor during a cocktail party!)

In all seriousness, I would really love it if you would write me back. Don't worry, you would not be "encouraging me."

Some personal info—I am 23, a senior at the University of Oregon and, against my better judgment, a journalism major. If you could tell me about how you got started in the world of Journalism and how you came to write for SPY I would be forever in your debt.

Ben Moebius  
Eugene, Oregon

*Sorry, Ben. Alexandra is unavailable. We are, however, now accepting applications for the dapper Jared Paul Stern (see contributors, page 12), who likes his martinis shaken, not stirred.*

**I** just finished reading your very funny article on Hogan's Heroes ["Spielberg's Heroes," by Steven Mirkin, July/August]. Let me correct what you said about Larry Hovis and myself. True, we appear to exist below celebrity radar, well, not really true. I have been on soap operas from 1972 to 1992 quite steadily. I have had a talk show (and who doesn't) on cable for the past four years, *A Conversation With Robert Clary*. Try to track that one—probably much more difficult than to track me.

Robert Clary  
Beverly Hills, California

**T**his was your comment to my letter: "You are obviously sniffing the wrong publication. Mr. Thomas writes for the *Observer*. I know Mr. Thomas writes for the *Observer*. It was a joke. Jeez. Who writes those comments for your magazine? A blonde?"

Anyway, on a more positive note, I'm pleased to report that my current issue is not at all malodorous. In fact, it's rather fragrant. There's just one thing, though. The last few pages tasted kind of funny.

Richard Torregrossa  
Coronado, California

*In addition to addressing the smell situation in this month's "From the SPY Mailroom," Richard, our blonde letters editor, Helga, will be contacting you shortly. In person.*

SPY welcomes letters from its readers. Address them to the Letters Editor, SPY, 49 East 21st Street, 11th floor, New York, New York 10010. Or write to us via e-mail at [SpyMagaz@aol.com](mailto:SpyMagaz@aol.com). Please include your daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. ☺

letter with a quote from his mother (who, we assume, is not rabid). No TV? You *are* a SPY reader, *oui*!

**But we want you to** know that we're not such a surly bunch of hipsters after all. Just to show how much we care about our readers, and that it's not all dollars and cents, we'll go ahead and publish the contribution of Ann Elise Rubin from Washington, D.C., who reveals a somewhat unhealthy obsession for female B-level actresses with her Celebrity Math suggestions: Juliette Lewis – Winona Ryder – Sandra Bernhard = Molly Ringwald. And Sally Field – Valerie Bertinelli = Barbara Hershey.

Ann Elise, what can we say except that here at SPY we value readers as much as celebrities. So now, for the first time, we present Reader Math! Ann Elise Rubin – Lori Frankian ÷ Larry Howes = Jamie Rosen of New York, New York (*JAMIE!*).

Oh, there we go, sounding surly again. We certainly don't want you to be *frightened* of writing us, like Chris Yurikiw from Montreal: "The trepidation with which one tests the waters of the sea of letters your publication must receive! Will my efforts be mocked? Will I win, win, win?!" He went on offer his analysis of the SPY list [September/October]: "The ten leading men in question have played at least one insipid, insidious, insulting role as either a naive, slow-learner, retard, idiot savant, imbecile, feeb, dweeb, stupe..." Chris, you lucky dog, you win, win, win! Not only will your efforts not be mocked, they will be rewarded.

That's right, readers. Starting with this issue, the first person to write in correctly identifying the significance of the SPY list will be sent a free SPY T-shirt—postage and everything! Really. So follow Chris' lead and submit your guesses! Or, put another way, get off the crapper and stop sniffing the paper. You dig? ☺



# Contributors

ALTHOUGH **Andrew Cohen** ("Hungry for Knowledge," p. 64) covered the Intifada in Gaza, the war in Sudan, and the Marines in Somalia, nothing prepared him for a trip to Rwanda with the Reverend Al Sharpton. "It was just one bad hair day after another," says Cohen. He has reported for *Newsweek*, Britain's *The Guardian*, and *The Nation*, but is most excited about "appearing in the Reverend's home videos of Africa."



NATIVE NEW YORKER **Vernon Silver** moved to Miami thinking that "the big story would happen—Fidel would fall any day." Three years later, after half a dozen trips to Cuba reporting for the *New York Times*, he's found a whole new story: "The Marx(ist) Brothers: Groucho! Harpo! Chico! Fidel!" (p. 78). He sent us this piece from the middle of a Key West refugee center as "masses of Cubans huddled around my Powerbook, yearning to be free."

"ETHICS ARE ETHICS" says columnist and longtime SPY contributor **David Shenk** ("Re-education Through Labor," p. 38), explaining that businessmen should be held accountable for their actions. Shenk's other recent work includes writing Doubleday's *The Skeleton Key Dictionary for Deadheads*—a compendium of Grateful Dead jargon and thirty years of lore, including "who came up with the idea for Cherry Garcia ice cream."

CANADIAN CURMUDGEON **Susan Baxter** lets loose her anger at those who would be nice in "What's So Damn Funny Anyway?" (p. 86). A former stand-up comedian herself, she believes those "ubiquitous brick walls that PC/TV comics are forever performing in front of just cry out for a firing squad." When she's not crying or laughing on her own, Baxter writes for magazines like *Psychology Today* and amuses herself by tripping frail old nuns on their way to Mass.

GETTING OUT JUST UNDER THE WIRE, **Jared Paul Stern** ("Eightysomething," p. 36) recently graduated from Bennington College with a degree in "literature, languages, and recreational turpitude." In addition to SPY, his work has appeared in *W*, *Details*, and *Detour* magazines. The Philadelphia-born, Canadian-raised writer is now living in Manhattan, "subsisting on a diet of John Cheever, Chet Baker, and Jim Beam."



LEGENDARY PHOTOGRAPHER **Phil Stern** (no relation to Jared) recorded a more natural side of 1940s and '50s Hollywood than the stylized shots typically associated with the period. In response to his guilt for "being a miserable father,

too busy pursuing my career," Stern began asking the stars he photographed to "make a funny face for my kids." Some of the results can be found in a continuing SPY series, "Phil Stern's Hollywood" (p. 19), beginning with this month's candid shot of James Dean.



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# Naked city

## Birds of a Feather

## One Sings, The Other Doesn't

**T**hey act alike, they walk alike, at times they even talk alike. But just how alike are the lives of Senator Alfonse "Fonz" D'Amato and John "Teflon Don" Gotti? The chart below illustrates the eerie similarities, although even we have trouble keeping it straight—which one is in prison?

### John "Dapper Don" Gotti

► For years, Gotti was **known** as "Dapper Don" and "Teflon Don." In court he found epithets for prosecutors Gleason ("fucking Irish **faggot**"), Cotter ("fuzzy-faced Irish faggot"), and Maloney ("drunken Irish faggot"). His more charitable gestures include blowing **kisses** at Gleason and ordering the return of a stolen "**weeping icon**" to a church in Queens.



► FBI bugs helped to decipher Gotti family lingo such as *omerta* (a vow of silence), **whack** (to kill, occasionally with a "fucking **baseball bat**" or by "putting a rocket in his pocket"), and "babbo" (pet name for idiot). Ultimately, Gotti was **ratted** on by his right-hand man, Sammy "The Bull" Gravano, who had the guts to **testify** against Gotti at his murder trial and help prosecutors put him away for life.



► Gotti came to power in the **Gambino** family after the murder of **Paul Castellano**. During the FBI's probe, it was revealed that the **Genovese** syndicate was discussing ways to **murder** the Gambinos. Meanwhile, Gotti's clan calmly tended to their official business at the Ravenite Social **Club** and Plaza **Disco**. Attorney General **Andrew Maloney** sought evidence of Gotti's dealings, including **extortion** and **murder**, and **lobbied** the grand jury to get the case.

► Gotti's **son-in-law** was **investigated** for jury tampering in the trial of Gotti's **brother**. Born in the **South Bronx** and boss of a **\$500 million** family, Gotti still accepted **contributions** from guests at his son's wedding.

### Al "The Fonz" D'Amato

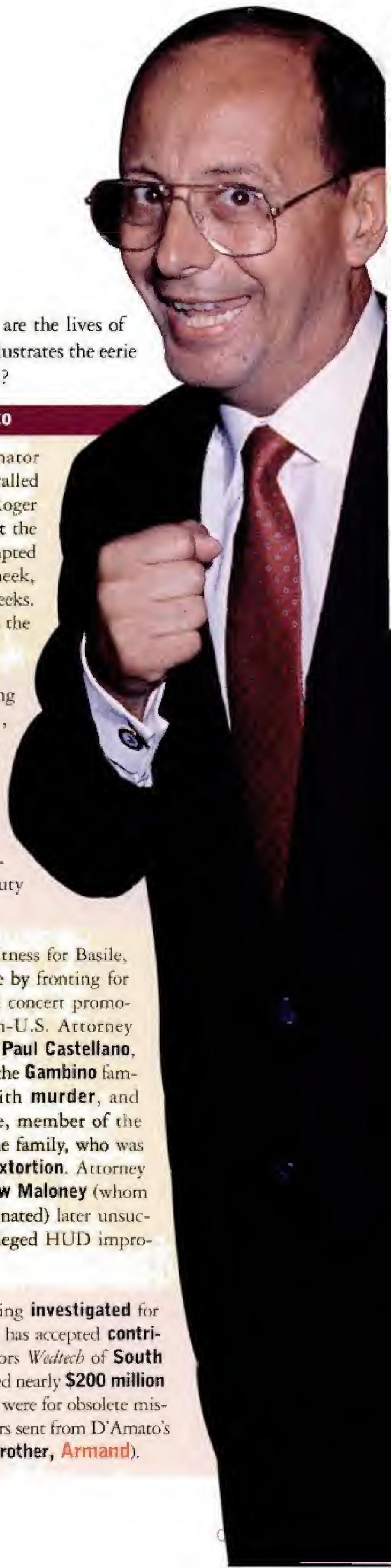
► D'Amato is **known** as "Senator Pothole" and "the Fonz." He called Robert Abrams a "**sissy**" and Roger Altman a "**gutless wonder**." At the trial of Phillip Basile, he attempted to **kiss** a prosecutor on the cheek, then *did* kiss Basile on both cheeks. Abrams labeling him a fascist in the '92 campaign made him **cry**.

► D'Amato is notorious for taking **swings** at his opponents, e.g., "Lizzie Holtzman took an ax/ She gave Geraldine 40 **whacks**..." D'Amato **ratted** on Altman during the Whitewater **testimony**, having called him the year before an "outstanding candidate for the position of Deputy Secretary of Treasury."

► D'Amato was a character witness for Basile, who became a multimillionaire by fronting for the mob in **discos, clubs**, and concert promotions. D'Amato **lobbied** then-U.S. Attorney Rudolph Giuliani on behalf of **Paul Castellano**, former head of the **Gambino** family charged with **murder**, and Mario Gigante, member of the **Genovese** crime family, who was charged with **extortion**. Attorney General **Andrew Maloney** (whom D'Amato nominated) later unsuccessfully **probed** D'Amato's alleged HUD improprieties on Long Island.



► D'Amato spent two years being **investigated** for improperly using his office. He has accepted **contributions** from defense contractors *Wedtech* of **South Bronx** and *Unysis* (which obtained nearly **\$200 million** in Navy contracts, half of which were for obsolete missile-firing kits, as a result of letters sent from D'Amato's office through the efforts of his **brother, Armand**).





# Banzai! I Sing the Sony Electric

Yukio Mishima meets Jack Welch Jr. meets  
Walt Whitman meets Sha Na Na

Just a few years ago, Japanese companies were kicking butt. Now, they're gritting their teeth and tightening their belts as leaner and more aggressive Asian counterparts steadily erode their manufacturing base. So what are the leading Japanese juggernauts doing to boost the national *esprit de corps* and restore the empire to its former glory? For starters, they're singing their hearts out. Below are four genuine Japanese company ditties and one phony. See if you can spot the faux song. —Jeff Hoyt

1. 'Neath the blue clouds, the white headquarters gleams:  
Garden of science, fruitful and fair!

In ginkgo trees birds of youth sing sweetly:

Fuji! Fuji! Fuji!

Ah, with one voice, let us sing a prosperous future.

2. Images like shiny samurai swords  
flicker with immense and powerful light.

This is Sony, most excellent in vision and beauty.

This is Sony, whose work is ours.  
Capturing life in moments of sweet  
memory,  
We are forever in your thoughts.

3. Let's gather young power here and  
light up like the hot light of the sun.  
New land of green and sea  
Growing splendidly in the world.  
This is Nippon Steel Kimitsu.

4. Looking at Fuji, wreathed in the white morning clouds,  
Gathered in hope, confident in our technology,  
We offer our work without stint, our sweat, our grease,  
For the happiness of the world and its people!  
Ah, this pride of Nissan!  
King of domestic cars, Nissan!

5. Flying over the ocean at dawn,  
waking the earth.  
Cranes' silver wings cleave the air in power,  
High soaring into the heavens of a new century:  
Japan Air Lines!



## The Fine Print

by Michael Applebaum

### Dear Diary: Just Kidding

One of Whitewater's near-casualties is the Treasury Secretary's 28-year-old Chief of Staff, Josh Steiner. When Steiner was asked to defend Roger Altman against charges of unethical conduct and lying to Congress, he was placed in the unenviable position of having to dispute his own diary. He did well to extricate himself, however, with Reagan-like memory loss and ample references to his opening statement—wherein he explained that he never actually *intended* to keep an accurate diary.

### I. If It Ducks Like A Duck...

SENATOR FAIRCLOTH: *You testified that you believe Roger Altman was candid with the committee, yet you wrote in your diary that Altman gracefully ducked the recusal issue. Is it your testimony that being candid and gracefully ducking are consistent?*

STEINER: Senator, I don't believe that he **ducked** any questions about recusal. I don't believe he was asked any questions about recusal.

*Well...what do you mean by gracefully **ducking** the recusal issue?*

The allusion here, Senator, is not to the recusal issue; the allusion is to questions concerning Treasury-White House contacts. And—

*...(D)o you mean to tell me {he's} **avoiding** answering questions on the issue, when you say {he's} **ducking**, is that what you mean?*

Senator, as I said—  
Give me your descrip-



THE FINE PRINT CONTINUED

tion of **ducking** a question.

Senator, as I said, I think Mr. Altman was truthful in his testimony before you.

Is truthful and **ducking** consistent in testimony?

I think Mr. Altman was asked a question which he did not anticipate. And he answered in a way that allowed him to convey the information in the clearest possible way that he could....

...And you're telling me that "be gracefully **ducked**" the questions he knew (he) was going to be asked.

Senator, if I might, if I were to describe that testimony today, I would undoubtedly choose different words.

Oh, I'm sure of that.... But you tell me the difference between **ducking** and **lying**.

...Senator, as I said, I have no reason to believe, nor do I believe, that Mr. Altman **lied** to this committee.

But he **ducked**?

Senator, I think he was asked a question which he didn't anticipate.

In fact, you kind of admired his **ducking**, because you said "be **ducked** gracefully" rather than clumsy... that's nicer **ducking** than kind of stumbling through a **duck** than to gracefully **duck**.

## II. Under Pressure

SENATOR RIEGLE: Now, let me read you the entries... "{Roger Altman} originally decided to recuse himself, but under intense pressure from the White House, he said he would make the final determination based on a recommendation...." When you say here, "but under intense pressure from the White House," what does that refer to?



### "On the Road" by Pam Kennedy (a.k.a. Ally Sheedy):

brighter and brighter  
every day  
calmer  
my insides slosh about like a nauseous ocean  
it takes great gulps of air  
words from religious books  
and Diet Cherry Coke to quiet the sound

### "I breathe a sigh of regret" by Pam Kennedy:

I breathe a sigh of regret  
for him  
it is so painful  
this letting go  
dark wound in my heart  
surrounded by the soft pink flesh of  
healing transformation

### "Teacher" by Mel McLean (a.k.a. Charlie Sheen):

...Teacher, teacher, I don't understand,  
You tell me it's like the back of my hand.  
Should I play guitar and join the band?  
Or head to the beach and walk in the sand?  
Oh, teacher, teacher, I don't understand...  
...Teacher, teacher, the years have passed,  
I never thought it would go so fast,  
The things I learned they didn't last.  
I'm headin' to sea as I raise the mast.  
Oh, teacher, teacher, I'm a peace of your past.

## Hollywood Canon

# Celebrity Poems, Part Deux

What genuine bards think of Tinseltown's part-time poets

**Y**eats. Millay. Browning. *Shoen*? Or, better yet—*Sheedy*? From the department of What Goes on in the Mind of a Celebrity comes the kicker of all conundrums: celebrities who think they're poets. As in getting published and everything. To discover, once and for all, the artistic merit of their verse, SPY submitted several poems written by Charlie Sheen and Ally Sheedy (under pseudonyms) to *Amelia*, a well-known poetry magazine, and solicited the opinion of editor Frederick Raborg, Jr. Below are Mr. Raborg's criticisms.—*Chip Rowe*

### Critique:

"I'm not going to say [it's] a bad poem, though it is true poems occasionally simply do not work. Most readers would not get beyond 'my insides slosh about like a nauseous ocean' for obvious reasons, but to follow that with 'words from religious books' would turn off most of those remaining, and, finally, you'd lose the rest with your juxtapositioning of religion to Diet Cherry Coke as a mute."

### Critique:

"I think you should consider using punctuation.... It becomes confusing for the reader. We cannot be sure what is meant by the 'soft pink flesh of healing,' because the flesh of the heart is not soft and pink. It is, rather, red and tough.... A poem can easily take off in many different directions. When that can occur, the poet has lost control."

### Critique:

"There is such a tremendous jump between the two stanzas, so much left out that makes the poem difficult to grasp.... Line three of the second stanza is something everyone over 50 discovers. The fourth line is confusing because you gave no forewarning of the sea as part of the solution. In line three, second stanza, 'they' is a lazy effort to maintain meter. Work a little harder and find another word or intent for that line.... Rework accordingly."


## The SPY List

Johnny Depp  
Elizabeth Wurtzel  
Jackie Gleason  
Steve Howe

Sam Kinison  
Walter Matthau  
George Bush  
Gary Coleman

River Phoenix  
Maria Shriver  
Elton John  
Marlon Brando





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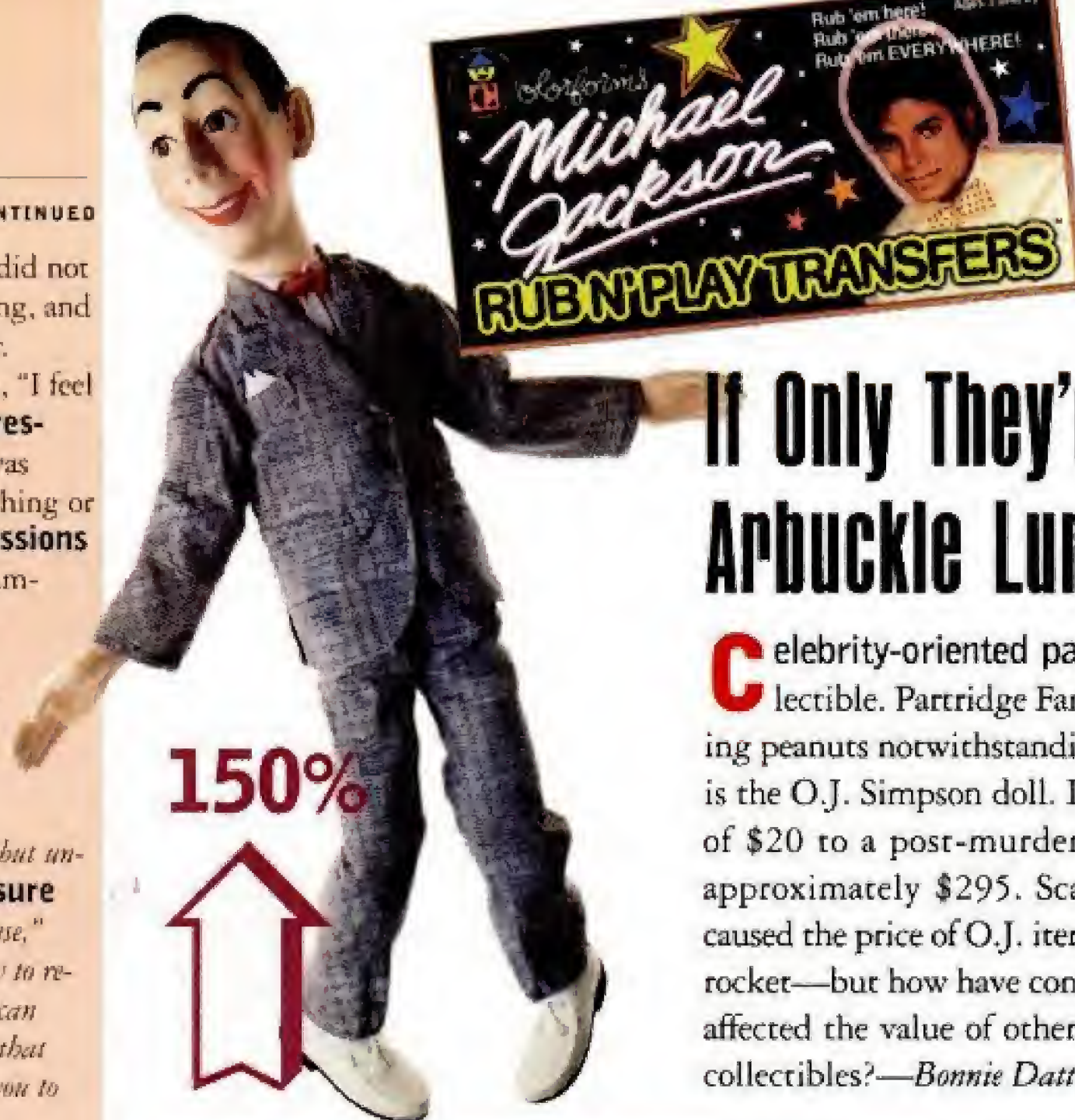
STEINER: ...I did not attend that meeting, and at no time did Mr. Altman say to me, "I feel under **intense pressure**." I think I was **surmising** something or giving my **impressions** based on the circumstances as I knew them.

...No, but look, let me narrow you down...I'm going specifically to your choice of the words "**but under intense pressure from the White House**," and I want you now to recall as fully as you can what the facts were that would have caused you to write those words.

Right. Mr. Altman...described to me what were strong arguments made by Mr. Nussbaum at that meeting, and I suspect I, without choosing my words particularly carefully, **interpreted** those arguments as encouraging him in a direction. And let me make it very clear that at no point did Mr. Altman say to me, "I feel **under pressure**" or "The White House is **pressuring** me to do something." Let me also make it clear that when I used "the White House," it is a **euphemism** for Mr. Nussbaum.

...When you say that Mr. Altman described to you what had been said by Mr. Nussbaum that created his impression of **intense pressure**, I want you think as carefully as you can as to exactly how Mr. Altman would have described that to you. What did he say to you?

I want to make it clear, Senator, that it was not **my impression** at the time that he was under **intense pressure**. As I said before, I did not write this diary for the purposes of providing a precise narrative.



150%



naked city

## If Only They'd Made Fatty Arbuckle Lunch Boxes

**C**elebrity-oriented paraphernalia has become extremely collectible. Partridge Family lunch boxes and Jimmy Carter walking peanuts notwithstanding, the hottest piece on the market today is the O.J. Simpson doll. Its value has risen from a pre-murder cost of \$20 to a post-murder price of approximately \$295. Scandal has caused the price of O.J. items to skyrocket—but how have controversies affected the value of other celebrity collectibles?—Bonnie Datt

200%



Item	Pre-scandal	Post-scandal
Talking Pee-Wee Herman Doll	\$40	\$150
Autographed photo of Nancy Kerrigan, Kristi Yamaguchi and Tonya Harding	\$800–\$1000	\$1,500
Michael Jackson Rub N' Play Transfers	No Market	\$5
Michael Jackson doll	\$20	\$100
O. J. autographed football	\$250	\$575
Mike Tyson autographed boxing glove	\$75	\$100
Pete Rose autographed baseball	\$50	\$50
Darryl Strawberry autographed bat	\$150	\$75
Woody Allen autographed photo	\$40	\$60
Mia Farrow autograph	\$10	\$10

## Blockheads Hip to Be Square

**N**ewsweek's motto could be "All the News That's Fit to Be Pop Culture-ized." Recently we've noticed a trend in which hard-news headlines have been given a softer, more accessible tone to attract today's savvy, "now" young readers. There's only one problem: their pop references are *slightly* out-of-date.—Tony Vanaria

"Go Ahead, Take My Prez" (7/12/93)  
 "Miami Advice" (9/20/93)  
 "An Offer He Should've Refused" (7/5/93)  
 "Hollywood & Vice" (8/23/93)  
 "Three Nights at the Opera" (10/18/93)  
 "Sunset Stripped" (7/26/93)  
 "Three Stars Are Born" (10/25/93)  
 "Globo Cop" (8/23/93)  
 "Room with a PU" (9/6/93)  
 "Jurassic Rock" (7/5/93)

"Hey, Lloyds, Make Our Day" (10/18/93)  
 "Schlockwork Orange" (7/5/93)  
 "Hey Sly, Where's the Beef?" (10/11/93)  
 "The Fear of Flaming" (6/20/94)  
 "Out On An Artificial Limb" (8/15/94)  
 "Brother, Can You Spare a Father?" (7/5/93)  
 "Regarding Barry" (7/25/94)  
 "Bill's Excellent Future" (10/11/93)  
 "Diary of a Mad Houseboy" (8/15/94)  
 "Bill's Island Adventure" (8/30/93)





**P**hil Stern's Hollywood. In the fifties, Stern was a well-known celebrity photographer whose subjects included everyone from Marilyn Monroe to John Wayne. But in addition to shooting studio portraits, Stern, after a session,

would often ask his famous subjects to "make a funny face" for his kids. Many, such as James Dean (here demonstrating his "primal scream" pose) obliged. Rarely seen, they offer an ironic view of celebrityhood. First in a series.



### III. Did I Say Tortured? I Meant Difficult

SENATOR BRYAN: Now in your diary you make reference to a **tortured** day, and it's my understanding that (it) was, in your view at least, **tortured**...because of the anguish as to whether to recuse or not to recuse. Is that an accurate characterization?

STEINER: I think that was one of the factors that made it a **difficult** day, Senator. **You may recall** that after Mr. Altman's testimony he was confronted with a number of news articles which commented on this matter, and he had had conversations with the editorial writers who had also commented on this matter. So there were a variety of factors at work....

...What were the considerations with respect to recusal? What was being discussed on this **tortured** day and by whom?

**I don't recall** the specific conversations about recusal on that day....

Who was party to the discussions on this **tortured** day?

Senator, **I don't recall** any specific conversation.... I believe Mr. Levy was involved.... I believe Ms. Hanson was involved. I believe Mr. Nye was involved. And there may have been others, but **I just don't recall**.

Among those people that you do recall being there, **do you recall** what their position was and what advice they gave Mr. Altman?

**I do not recall** their advice at that time, no.

**Do you recall** anybody at that meeting or at that time frame on this **tortured** day—as you've characterized it—that urged Mr. Altman not to

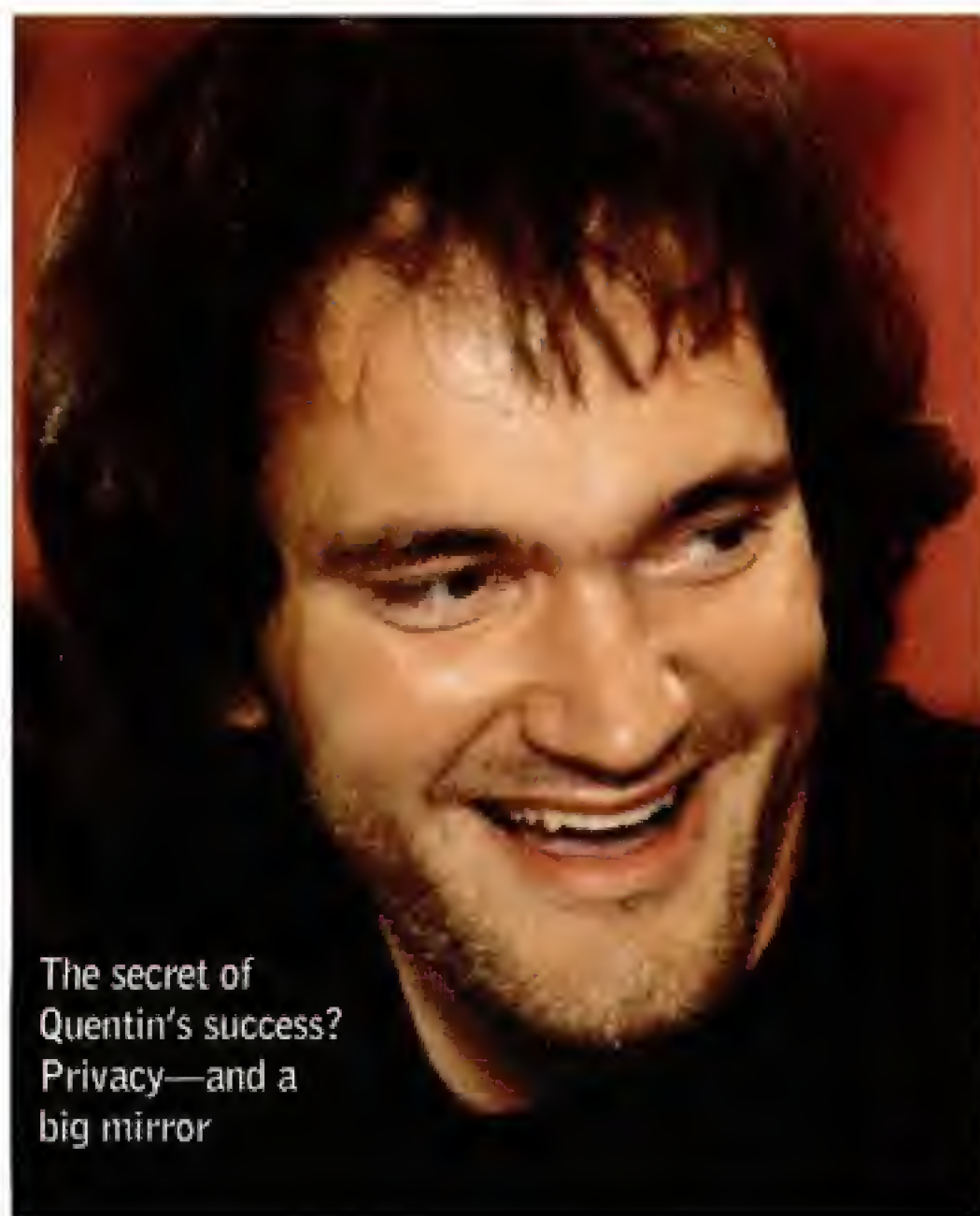
## naked city

### Idiot Savants

## Mr. Blue on Line Two...

See, Lee Marvin was really just pissed off at his girlfriend. And you thought *The Dirty Dozen* was all about World War II?

**The Date:** September 22, 1994. **The Scene:** A press conference held after the New York Film Festival's premiere of Quentin Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction*. **The Players:** Writer/director Tarantino and *Fiction* costar John Travolta, whose role is being hailed as a "comeback." With *Reservoir Dogs* already under his belt, Tarantino is being hailed as a "genius." Here's how a genius sounds.



The secret of Quentin's success? Privacy—and a big mirror

**Interviewer:** Describe the journey from *Reservoir Dogs* to *Pulp Fiction*.

**Tarantino:** I don't think about it that often.

*Do you write parts for specific actors?*

Yes and no.

*Do you let your actors improvise?*

If you [the actor] have a better idea, I'm Dumbo ears.

*Have you hung out with gangsters?*

The reason why my crime stuff is realistic is because it's human, it makes sense.... I doubt

I'm gonna live long enough to make all the movies that are in my head. It's just kind of an incubation process for when it comes time to make the next one. Like, if you date a lot of different girls, and then all of a sudden you're like, "Hey, I really like this one." And, uh, you start getting serious with that one, you know? That's basically it.

I can have an idea in my head for like five years—a bunch of POWs go to Germany to blow up a chateau—

and that's the idea, right? That could be in my head for five years, and the day I sit down to write it, uh, if I break up with my girlfriend and I'm all fucked up about it—that will find its way into the piece. If I have anything special to offer, that's it. It's personal.

*Why does Vincent [Travolta's character] have to die?*

'Cause that's just the way it is. He was the guy that was sent

there. One of the things I like about the movie, that I'm really happy about—I almost feel like an idiot about saying it for the press, so if you quote it you'll ruin it for the audience, so let your conscience be your guide—it's not just a stuntman getting killed, it's not just an extra getting killed, it's Vincent Vega, you know him.

**Travolta:** The reason, actually, was that you couldn't have had the problem of putting me on the toilet too often in

the movie. If I hadn't been on the toilet, I actually would have lived.

**Tarantino:** I actually like—when I'm at a party, or when I was working at day jobs—I would go into the bathroom and hang out there for a little bit. Because it's like a place where you're by yourself. Especially when you're at work—which you really don't wanna do—you kinda just escape to the bathroom, and close the door, and it's a great room. It's small, it's completely private, and no one is ever gonna bust in on you. And you've got this big mirror looking in front of you. I mean, what more could you ask for?



Bathroom buddies Quentin and John



# Howie at the Superstore Literary Backscratching

by Howard Kaplan



"Fiercely witty and tender, and a pleasure to read."

**Meg Wolitzer** on *Carrie*

**Fisher's** *Surrender the Pink*

"If I could write another book, I'd want it to be this one."

**Fisher** on **Wolitzer's** *Friends for Life*

"Trenchant and witty...Raban delivers himself of some of the most memorable prose ever written about urban America."

**Henry Kisor** on **Jonathon**

**Raban's** *Hunting Mister*

*Heartbreak*

"It is the reader's privilege to

## Books We Stopped Reading After the First Line or Two

"Cole January knew he should have stayed in bed the minute he swung his legs over the side and dropped his warm feet on her breasts. They were icy cold."

—*Stand-in for Murder*, by Lynn Bradley

"It was 1965. Sara was eleven years old. America was losing its innocence—fine, white hopes scattered by a wind no one was prepared for."

—*Bondage*, by Parti Davis

"Golden sunlight glittered from the Rhine's depths like a fire in the flood, brightening the dark waters into the torchlit grandeur of a river-king's hall. With a shout, Sigfrith, the weariness and sore muscles of his day at the forge forgotten, stripped off his filthy tunic, ran out on the edge of a rock jetty and dived into the water laughing."

—*Rhinegold*, by Stephan Grundy

be able to ride...in the company of this generous spirit."

**Raban** on **Kisor's** *Zephyr*

**Susan Cheever** on **Erica**

**Jong's** *Fear of Fifty*

"I devoured this book as if my life depended on it."

**Jong** on **Cheever's** *A*

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recuse himself?

I don't recall specific items that he received one way or another, Senator.

Okay.

#### IV. Barbara to the Rescue

SENATOR BOXER: ...I frankly think that too much is made of this diary. Now, as I understand it, you're not really backing away from the things that you saw firsthand...you're not backing away from things that you knew when you put them in the diary, things that people actually said to you, you're not backing away from the actual facts?

STEINER: I wouldn't say that I'm backing away from anything, Senator.

SENATOR RIEGLE: Senator Boxer, would you just stop there? I mean, I don't quite know what that phrase means. Either the diary is basically accurate with its facts or not... Is it accurate, the basic text?

STEINER... I'd be happy to go through it on a point-by-point basis and talk about where there are differences and where additional clarity would be helpful...

RIEGLE: See, I think what you're doing... is what Roger Altman did in here on the 24th of February. You're not giving a direct, straight answer. I mean, I think

(Senator Boxer) gave you an opportunity to do that.

BOXER: (Senator Riegle), that is not my conclusion at all... And I would repeat, as far as I understand in your testimony, as far as I can gather, you're not backing away from the basic facts that you, yourself, knew firsthand. Am I correct?

STEINER: That's correct, Senator. You are.

BOXER: I thought I was correct on that point. ☺

## America's Yakking

# How to Succeed in Show Business Without Really Trying

## A SPY talent search for new talk-show stars

When watching a Formula One driver take a turn at 140 miles per hour or a violinist perform a two-hour concerto from memory, most of us silently acknowledge that there are some jobs for which others are better suited than we. But who hasn't watched a talk-show host in action and thought, "Hell, I could do *this*."

We estimate that every American with an operative mouth has thought at one time or another that he or she could seamlessly replace Geraldo or Oprah (and we're not saying they couldn't). To test our hypothesis, SPY ran a bogus help-wanted ad in *Variety* and the *Village Voice* seeking a prospective host for a TV talk show. We were deluged with letters, resumes, pictures, and tapes from a cornucopia of applicants, including an award-winning fiction writer, a deputy sheriff, a blue-haired performance artist, a Whiffenpoof—the list goes on.

Here are some of the highlights:

### Best Openers

"I am writing at this time in response to your ad in the *Voice* re-

garding a Talk Show Host. I actually have no desire to be one, but I've come to the conclusion that I'm rapidly turning into one (and a damn good one at that) and that I might as well receive some compensation for this curse/blessing."—Christopher L.

"I am writing to you, because I don't have a typewriter to be able to type my interest on paper, so therefore I am using my hand."—John A.

"Welcome to the world of Pop Rox, where there's always free candy, rockin' tunes, and pants



Best Come-Hither Pose (Female)



Best Hair (Underarm)

pissin' laughs."—Jen M.

"Obviously, I saw your advertisement in the *Village Voice*, or you would not be hearing from me."—Mark V.

"I am funny."

—John D.

### Best Picture

A Xerox of a Xerox of a driver's license picture.—Christopher L.

### Best Skills

"Stage fighting... restaurant skills."

—Jeff W.

"Target shooting (9mm/.38/.357)... Cry And Burp On Cue."

—Kim C.

"Movable Body Parts."—Leigh R.

"Adding Machine."

—Steve M.

"Give Paw, Wear Wig, Dye Hair."

—Tolve X.

"Rope, Bridges, Roof-climbing, Steel Beams, Steel Girders/Up and Down Beams."

—R.L.

### Best Performing Experiences

"Phonesex, Lies, &

Videotape" [Film]

—Billy C.

"Balls" [Theater]

—Steve M.

"It's Ralph" [Theater]—Matthew B.

"Voodoo Plastic Arm" [TV]—Kim C.

"Glaxo/Azantac" (Acrobatic soloist) [Industrial video]

—Eric H.

### Best Work Experiences

"Model/Hostess, JC Penney Co. Paramus, NJ. Cookie Monster & Bert & Ernie characters."—Angelica G.

"Participated as a singer lip-synching (along with a trio) to 'I Will Survive' by Gloria Gaynor in the annual Talent Show. [John Dewey High School 1977–80]...Danced in the Annual Talent show where I appeared in a local newspaper. [Elementary School P.S. 177 1968–1975]"

—Gina Marie F.

"A Part-time Cinderella (the ragged poor girl), P.S. 225Q. 6th



grade."—*Julia H.*

"Recruited membership for an undergraduate performing group dedicated to Renaissance vocal polyphony."—*George S.*

"I work for *Stripper* magazine."

—*Angelica G.*

"In 1975 Roberto was imprisoned by the Franco dictatorship in Spain for doing plays against oppression."

—*Roberto M.*

## Best Senses of Hubris

"That is not to say that I was ever anything but spectacular at anything I ever did; I was."—*Rob B.*

"The best part about my questioning technique is that it logically progresses from semi-innocuous rhetorical (peppered with lively banter) to gut-wrenching, soul-searching questions of a near transcendental quality."—*Christopher L.*

"I was also chosen as one of the most sexiest radio personalities in America by *Playgirl* magazine."—*Tim G.*

"At the risk of sounding immodest, I definitely have an

exciting personality."

—*Steve M.*

"It appears that you are looking for a television host. In my humble opinion, I am the person you need."—*Mark V.*

"I recently 'saved the show' w/an appearance on *America's Talking*, the rest of the guests sucked."

—*John D.*

"As an artist, I need to live in the world with a sense of reality, justice, and compassion. In order to do so I must actively respond



Best Hair  
(Male)

to the conditions I have insights into. Simply to be helpful when able—that's what power really is."

—*Roberto M.*

"People pursue me. They like me. And, without wanting to be guilty of excessive arrogance, I think I know why."

—*G.K.*

## Best Reasons for Hiring

"Right before I saw your ad, my mom said I talk so much, I should have my own talk show."—*Heidi P.*

"I have no experience in this field, but who cares."—*John A.*

"When was the last time you saw a Jewish girl from New Jersey look this much like a WASP?"—*Marta R.*

## Best Apologies

"Oh, I'm not the best speller in the world."—*John A.*

"Sadly, in the past five years, I really tapped into a lot of ugliness in myself. I realized that unconsciously, I was prejudging people I did not know."—*Susan K.*

"I just moved to New York City and I am poor, very low budget, and I just could not afford a video or any kind of fancy stuff."

—*Nicholas A.*

## Best Hard Luck Stories

"My parents came to the United States in 1973 looking for better life. They had hopes and dreams for their five young daughters. But soon the dreams faded with the death of my father a few years later. Now, all that mattered was survival."

—*Susan K.*

"I am a mother of two. A single one at that. My eldest child's father is in jail. My youngest's has



Best Come-Hither  
Pose (Male)

disowned her from birth. I have been a so-called street kid since I was 13 years old. I have done just about everything (except prostitution and drug use) and have been through everything."

—*Heidi P.*

"I live on the Lower East Side; across the street is a rooster farm and heroin shop..."

—*Doug V.*

## Best SAT Score

630 Verbal/730 Math—*Mark V.*

## Best Family Pedigree

Princess T. of Auersperg, Austria [envelope sealed with wax and royal seal]

## Best Reference

"When casting *Italian Movie*, Roberto recalled a conversation he had many years before while recovering from political imprisonment on Marlon Brando's island in the South Pacific. At the time Marlon said to Roberto, 'You should work with Rita Moreno, she's got a lot to give and she is as passionate about her beliefs as you are.'"

—*Roberto M.*

## Best Sense of Humor

"If we can find a way to appreciate the details, to be aware of the ways in which we are particular at any given moment, then inevitably discovery and, with the right attitude, humor will ensue."—*G.K.*







## The Rules of Regurgitation The Emperor's New Prose

Bret Easton Ellis struts the stuff that has made him the literary world's hottest autoplagiarist

Ellis' Latest: Disjointed, Pasted Together, and Recycled" read the headline of the *New York Observer's* review of Bret (*Less Than Zero*, *The Rules of Attraction*) Ellis' latest literary tome, *The Informers*. And for good reason: practically the entire content of the novel appeared some eight years ago under one cover—as Bret's undergraduate thesis, entitled *This Term's Model*. Submitted to the faculty of Bennington College in June of 1986, it was resubmitted to the American public in 1994.

A quick comparison of the tables of contents from the two works would seem to indicate that only three stories have been carried over from thesis to novel—the identically named chapters

"At the Still Point," "Letters From L.A.," and "On the Beach." *Oh*, you're saying. *Is that all?* Sadly, no. Upon closer inspection, there are four other communal chapters—with strikingly similar prose and a few character-name changes—that received only minor surgery. As if that wasn't enough, the chapter called "In the Islands" also appeared in 1986, in issue #18 of *The Bennington Review*. All in all, seven out of nine chapters of Bret's college thesis appear in *The Informers*, and including "Islands," eight out of the novel's 13 chapters—or approximately 62 percent—are recycled. For all we know, the other five chapters also appeared in previous incarnations, but were thought unfit to publish.

### A TALE OF TWO TABLES OF CONTENTS

#### Original Chapter *This Term's Model*

1. Call from Shelter Island

3. At the Still Point

4. Laura

5. In Transit

7. Letters from L.A.

8. Vampire from the Valley

9. On the Beach

#### Corresponding Chapter *The Informers*

1. Bruce Calls from Mulholland

2. At the Still Point

3. The Up Escalator

9. Another Gray Area

8. Letters from L.A.

10. The Secrets of Summer

11. On the Beach

#### Major Difference Between the Two:

"Sam" changes to "Bruce," and he hasn't called for 2 months, instead of 1½

None

Apartment belongs to "Martin," not "Michael"

Fun Boy 3 sing "Dance with Me" instead of "Our Lips Are Sealed"

"Anne" sends her letters to "Murray," instead of *The Rules of Attraction's* "Sean Bateman"

None

None

## Naughty Books

What they didn't teach you in jail

Nestled in the dank, sweaty cleavage of 8th Avenue in N.Y.C., half a block west of the future home of Disneyland-on-the-Hudson, one finds The Fun Emporium. Displayed in the

windows are the typical tourist lures of T-shirts, souvenirs, and masks. A closer inspection, however, reveals something more titillating: "Unusual Books On Restricted Subjects."

■ How to Beat a Parking Ticket

■ How to Disappear Completely and Never Be Found

■ How to Pick Pockets for Fun and Profit

■ Be Your Own Undertaker: How to Dispose of a Dead Body

"We don't know what people are doing with this stuff when they leave," says salesman Lou

Lancaster. "A guy who goes to a hardware store to buy a chain saw can be getting it to cut up wood or to kill his wife."

So who buys the books? "The majority of customers are college kids and younger," Lou says. "So long as it's not kiddie porn or incest, we can get away with selling just about anything."

—Barry Zeger



NO DOUBT

ABOUT IT!

Play

# Barq's Match the DNA

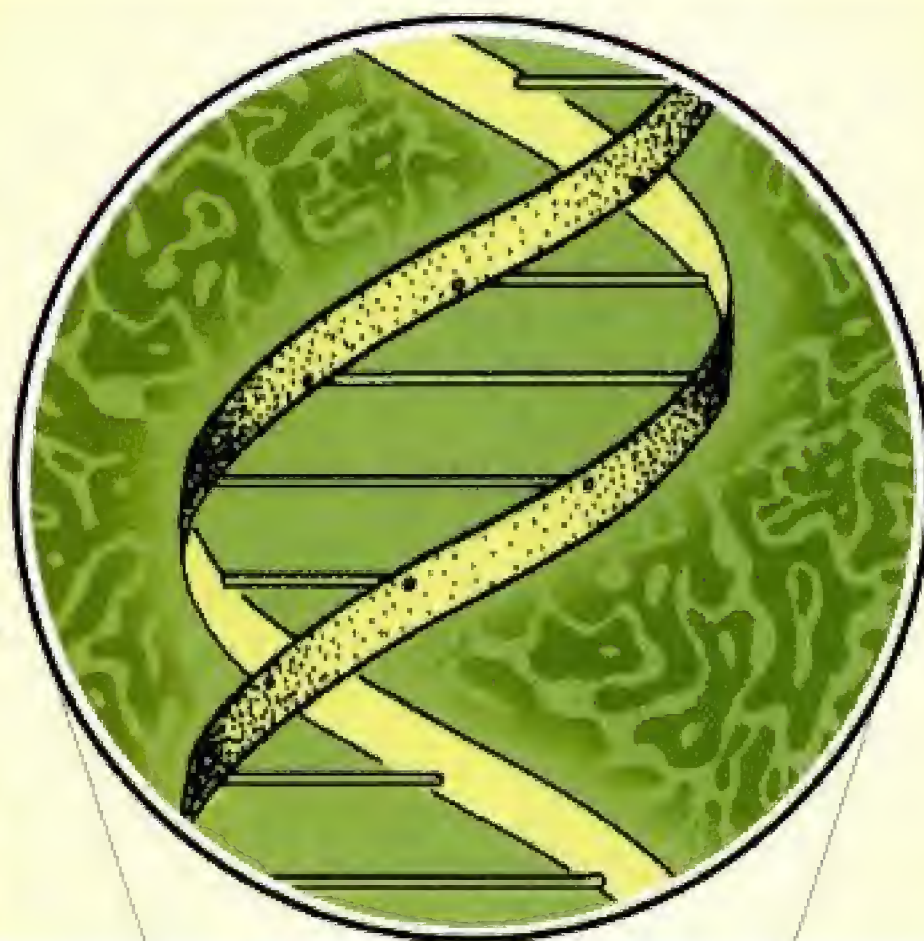


## S W E E P S T A K E S

How to play:

### FIND!

Your official BARQ'S "Match the DNA" game piece in this magazine!



### Sample DNA

If your DNA matches this sample, YOU LOSE!



\*For complete list of rules, see back of game piece.



Scope these!

**GRAND PRIZE**  
TRIP FOR TWO to IXTAPA, MEXICO

**5 FIRST PRIZES**  
\$1,000 LEGAL FEE REIMBURSEMENT

**100 SECOND PRIZES**  
"DOCTOR DNA" WHITE LAB COAT

**1,000 THIRD PRIZES**  
BARQ'S LICENSE PLATE FRAME

**10,000 MORE PRIZES**  
Antique BARQ'S bottle opener PLUS coupon for FREE six-pack or two-liter of BARQ'S products.

### SCRATCH!

To reveal YOUR DNA sample and compare it to DNA sample printed on the game piece!



### WIN!

If YOUR DNA sample DOES NOT MATCH the DNA sample on your game piece, YOU WIN the prize indicated on your game piece!

"Match the DNA", "Doctor DNA" and the dynamic double helix device are trademarks of Barq's, Inc. ©1994 Barq's, Inc.

## THE ROOT BEER WITH IDENTITY





## Separated at Birth?



Bratty political offspring  
Andrew Giuliani...



...and Rush Limbaugh?



Surgeon General Joycelyn  
Elders...



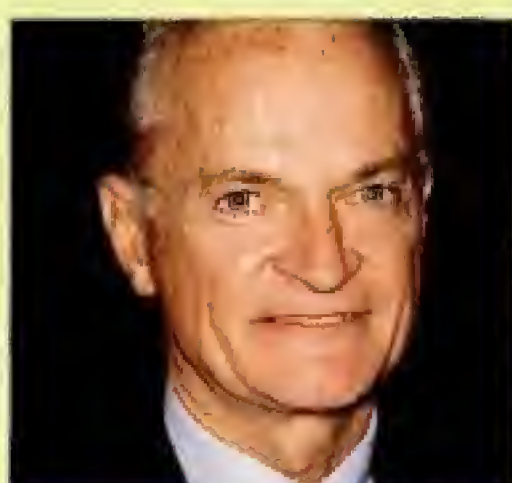
...and Garry Shandling?



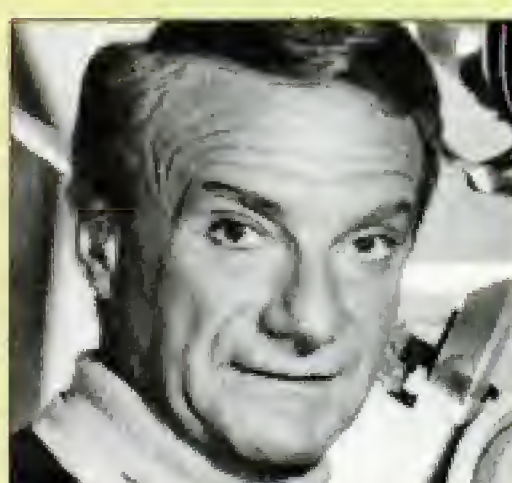
"Bad Lieutenant"  
Harvey Keitel...



...and incompetent  
corporal Larry Storch?



Time Inc. chairman  
Reg Brack...



...and Dr. Smith from *Lost  
In Space*?



Nauseatingly cheerful  
dinosaur Willard Scott...



...and—?

naked city

## Elements of Style

# Teaching B-Girls How to Use Meat Whistles

From *Penthouse* to *YM*, SPY takes a sneak peek at magazine jargon

The average Joe might find a dictionary more than adequate for a lifetime of spelling needs. But imagine that you are a copy editor for *Rolling Stone* and you need to know how to spell "homeboy," "jack-off," and "B-girl." Or, as a proofreader for *High Times*, you are required to know whether "Early Pearl" and "Haze"—two breeding strains of marijuana—should be capitalized. *Webster's* probably won't have the answers you're looking for, but fear not—most magazines have their own "house-style" supplements.

As a rule, style sheets infuse their grammatical directives with examples that are consistent with the magazine's editorial flavor. For instance, when establishing the proper use of possessives, the literary-minded *Details* uses examples such as "Dickens's novels," while the less mentally challenging *YM*, on the other hand, settles for "Brooke Shields' mother."

One of the many hats worn by the copy editor is that of maintainer of uniformity, making sure that each of these rules is applied to all of the magazine's pages. This can be arduous. The *High Times* style sheet, in fact, admits as much: "Since it is primarily composed of the ravings of drug-addled semi-literates, it's difficult to keep the thing consistent."

Pep talks notwithstanding, it is precisely such precious words of wisdom these guides dispense that makes them so valued. Take, for example, this clarifier from *Details*: "Words as words in quotes, roman, not italicized. The word 'infer' is often misused." Yes, that's much better.

Often a magazine's style sheet can say as much about editorial direction—or lack thereof—as the magazine itself. In how many publications can the compound adjectives "civil rights movement" and "criminal justice procedure" peacefully coexist alongside (on the same page, no less) "trouser snake," "fur-burger," "meat whistle," and "knobjob," as they do on the *Penthouse* list of often-used words?

And how many high-minded magazines such as *YM* would have a section about "nondiscriminatory language" that includes a warning like this? "Because our readers are young women in the process of developing lifelong attitudes toward themselves and others...we should try to eliminate...the subtle subliminal 'hints' that women are the inferior sex."

On the same sheet are listed the proper spellings for "blow-dry," "eyeliner," "face-lift," "Ford Models Inc.," "go-see," "hairdo," "miniskirt," and "pom-pom."—*Jack Lard*





# THE REDEMPTION OF Marion Barry

BY  
MICHAEL  
DOUGAN



**1987** WHEN WASHINGTON, D.C. FAILED TO EVEN MAKE A START AT CLEARING THE SNOW AWAY AFTER A GIGANTIC STORM IN JANUARY, BARRY CALLED IN FROM CALIFORNIA WHERE HE WAS SPENDING SIX DAYS ATTENDING THE SUPER BOWL.



I'VE BEEN WORKING TOO HARD. I'M GOING TO TAKE A LOT MORE VACATION TIME...

**1988** IN DECEMBER, BARRY WAS IN A DOWNTOWN RAMADA INN WITH CHARLES LEWIS WHEN TWO D.C. DETECTIVES WERE CALLED BACK FROM AN ATTEMPT TO MAKE AN UNDERCOVER DRUG PURCHASE FROM LEWIS.



CALLED BACK?

I THINK I HEARD SOMETHING... SHOULD WE HIDE THE STASH?

...I JUST MADE A PHONE CALL, DON'T SWEAT IT!

FORGET ABOUT IT. GO HOME.

THE REDSKINS ROCK! LET'S DO SOME MORE BLOW...

DECEMBER 29, 1989

**BUSTED!**

JANUARY 18, 1990

**CONVICTED!**



...AT NO TIME DID I SEEK ANY DRUGS, USE ANY DRUGS, OR HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF ANY DRUGS...

SORRY, BABE...

DAMN BITCH SET ME UP!

WAIT A MINUTE...

...IS THAT THING ON?

DO YOU SWEAR TO TELL THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH, AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH, SO HELP YOU GOD?

ARE YOU TALKING TO ME?

...GOTTA MATCH?

**SENTENCED!** BARRY SPENDS SIX MONTHS IN PRISON, WHERE HE REAFFIRMS HIS AFRICAN ROOTS AND REDISCOVERS HIS SPIRITUAL SELF.



I CAN'T BELIEVE I NEVER SAW THIS ON T.V.!

ROOTS

ALEX HALEY

**1994 BARRY RE-ELECTED!**



HEY BILL! IT'S ME, MARION! LET'S DO LUNCH!

BARRY WINS! TELLS NATION "GET OVER IT."

I'LL TRY TO PENCIL YOU IN...

BARRY'S POLITICAL COMEBACK BEGINS WITH HIS ELECTION TO THE CITY COUNCIL IN 1992.



## Three-Star Take-Out

# Unmovable Feasts

"We absolutely positively don't deliver and we don't have Snapple for sure..."

**T**hey're among the finest restaurants in the world. Their meals are meticulously prepared and masterfully presented. But what if you just don't have the time for an elaborate sit-down dining experience? What if you're hanging out watching *Cops* or

QVC with a friend and realize that you have an undeniable hankering for Maine halibut with fiddleheads? Would one of these fancy-schmancy establishments deign to deliver or provide take-out? We were hungry and we wanted to know...

### Café Pierre, 2 East 61st Street, N.Y.C.

SPY: Hi, do you have the sliced loin of veal this evening?

HOST: Yes, the veal is on.

SPY: Okay, I'd like one order of that, and one of the caramelized onion and goat cheese tarts, and I'd like that delivered please.

HOST: You know, we don't have anything to go.

SPY: Oh, so you don't do delivery or take-out.

HOST: This is the Café Pierre, sir. Our food never leaves the dining room.

SPY: So it's the food-not-leaving-the-dining-room concept.

HOST: Right. We just don't have any of the packaging materials available.

SPY: How about if I bring my own packaging materials? I've got the basics—you know, Tupperware, Saran Wrap.

HOST: I'd have to speak to the chef...he just wants his food, you know, it's not set up for travel.

SPY: What if I gave the chef my materials and just left, maybe go have a cigarette?

HOST: I'll have to find out.

### Montrachet, 239 West Broadway, N.Y.C.

SPY: Hello, do you have your



Maine halibut with fiddleheads this evening?

HOST: I think it's on the menu...are you coming in?

SPY: Well, I'd like to order that with some coconut flan and have it delivered.

HOST: I don't know if we can...

SPY: How about the chilled cucumber soup red snapper?

HOST: We don't—are you trying to tease me?

SPY: No!

HOST: I can't send you anything because we're not a take-out restaurant.

SPY: We'll have to come in then?

HOST: I think you'll have to do that. You've been here before, I assume.

SPY: Oh, yes.

### Bouley, 165 Duane Street, N.Y.C.

SPY: Yes, I called in an order for delivery around fifteen minutes ago, and I'd like to know if I can change it.

HOST: For delivery? An order of what?

SPY: A steak and a bottle of Merlot. I wanted to add it to a Snapple and some pudding...[Hold]

HOST 2: Sir? We're a fine dining—we're a fine restaurant. This is Restaurant Bouley. We don't do take-out service.

SPY: Hmm, when I spoke to Gerard, he didn't mention that.

Host 2: We don't even have a Gerard here. It could be Mark or—

SPY: Mark, yes, that's it...

[Hold]

MARK: A Snapple? I don't think we

have Snapple, do we? We positively don't deliver and we don't have Snapple for sure and...I can't imagine anyone saying that we deliver.

SPY: Hmm. None of the guys in the back could do that kind of thing? [Hold]

MANAGER: Can I help you?

SPY: Well, Gerard told me [my order] would be delivered in a half hour.

MANAGER: Oh, you've gotta be kidding me.

SPY: Absolutely not...[Hold]

DAVID BOULEY: Can I help you?

SPY: I placed a delivery and I wanted to know if I could change the order.

DAVID BOULEY: This is David Bouley, and I've only [made deliveries] maybe six times for sick friends.

SPY: I really wanted...

DAVID BOULEY: I suggest you try another place.







## Microslob

# Filthy Stinking Rich

The personal habits of America's most powerful geek

**N**erdy genius Bill Gates, cofounder of Microsoft, doesn't take enough showers and is a poor dresser, according to an ex-girlfriend: "Bill just doesn't think about clothes, and his hygiene is not good." Other fascinating facts about the multi-billionaire include:

■ On Boy Scout hikes in his childhood days, Gates would invariably win the Troop 186 "Dirty Boy" award for having the dirtiest clothing.

■ When Gates introduced his spreadsheet program, Excel, at New York's Tavern on the Green restaurant, he showed up un-

showered, unshampooed, and unshaven. One horrified Microsoft executive grouched, "I just couldn't imagine, you know, it only takes five minutes to take a shower."

■ In meetings and on airplanes, he rocks back and forth, not unlike autistic patients in mental hospitals. When he travels by airplane, he usually flies coach and is often seen napping with a blanket over his head.

■ As a child, he loved to stand in a trash can and jump out of it from a standstill to amuse his sisters. At work, he occasionally jumps over his desk chair in

similar fashion. On the way to meetings, he impulsively jumps up and slaps the wall or ceiling, trying to reach greater heights.

■ Gates was nicknamed "Gravy Train" by a fellow poker player because of his unflagging but usually unsuccessful habit of staying in the pot when most players would fold.

■ Harvard professor Thomas Cheatham said this about Gates: "In terms of being a pain in the ass, he was second in my whole career here. He's an obnoxious human being...just generally not a pleasant fellow to have around the place."—*Ed Lucaire*

## STOLEN MOMENTS

## RED HOT + COOL



DIGABLE PLANETS  
HERBIE HANCOCK  
ME'SHELL NDEGÉCELLO  
MC SOLAAR  
GURU  
MICHAEL FRANTI/SPEARHEAD  
INCOGNITO  
THE PHARCYDE  
DONALD BYRD  
CARLEEN ANDERSON  
US3  
DON CHERRY  
JOSHUA REDMAN  
BRANFORD MARSALIS  
THE ROOTS  
ROY AYERS  
PHAROAH SANDERS

RONNY JORDAN  
RON CARTER  
LESTER BOWIE  
WAN WAN WATSON  
UFO  
RAMSEY LEWIS  
GROOVE COLLECTIVE  
BERNIE WORRELL  
TONY RÉMY  
UMAR BIN HASSAN/ABIODUN OYEWOLE  
(formerly of The Last Poets)  
WATTS PROPHETS  
\*PLUS BONUS 3 SONG CD  
BRANFORD MARSALIS  
ALICE COLTRANE  
PHAROAH SANDERS





## naked city

### Freefall in Sitcom Hell

## M-I-C-, See You After The Paul Lynde Show

**T**he new Touchstone Television/Walt Disney production *All American Girl*, starring Margaret Cho, depicts an Americanized Valley girl interacting with her more traditionally mannered, Asian family. Judging by the wholesomeness of the sitcom, one would imagine that Margaret has had a similar past. But just how squeaky clean is Disney's modern-day Annette Funicello?

■ During her stand-up years, Cho supplemented her income by recording pornographic messages for phone-sex companies.

■ Her early patter included stories of attending S&M parties and comparisons of butt plugs.

■ In a monologue, she recently revealed: "I wanted [the show] to be called *The Margaret Cho Show* because I'm such an egomaniac...so I had a huge tantrum and said, 'Fuck you, we're going to call it *Chinkies*....' I'm not really allowed to use the word 'vagina' because I don't even use mine. Does anybody want it?... I'm just going to have to cover it with leaves and hope somebody falls in.... I have one pick-up line that never works—I'll walk over and say, 'Stick it in!'"

So how does Disney's latest moppet fit into her new surroundings? Describing the first time she got fisted, she explained "I felt like a Muppet," then followed with an impression of Kermit the Frog getting an armful.



### Rare Diseases

## Please Don't Scare the Frenchmen

Turn your head, cough, and regurgitate stomach contents, please

**P**resident Clinton wasn't kidding when he said *universal* coverage. His original health-care plan called for six billion dollars to fund the research and treatment of rare and unusually severe illnesses. Apparently, this is money well spent: About 1,000 rare diseases are certified by the National Organization of Rare Diseases; two are acne and hiccups. Here are a few others.—Michael Applebaum

Disease	Symptoms	Treatment
<b>Hairy Tongue</b>	A yellowish, brownish, blackish, or bluish discoloration of the tongue; a bad taste in the mouth	Avoidance of mouthwash
<b>Precocious Puberty</b>	Among females, breast development and menstruation before the age of ten; among males, facial and body hair growth, a deepening voice	Hormones, family counseling
<b>Jumping Frenchmen of Maine</b>	An unusually extreme startle reaction identified in lumberjacks of French-Canadian descent; jumping, raising the arms, yelling, obeying sudden commands	Eliminating the practice of intentionally startling or teasing the individual
<b>Blue Diaper Syndrome</b>	A metabolic disorder characterized by bluish urine, failure to thrive, constipation, blue stains on infants' diapers	Avoidance of turkey and warm milk
<b>Gastroesophageal Reflux</b>	A flowing back of stomach contents into the mouth; choking on regurgitated material	Elevating the head during sleep, taking Rolaids, avoiding spicy foods



At first, I didn't believe it myself.

Not too long ago, I received a phone call from a woman in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, whose real name is Mrs. Jack Daniel.

She told me that for years, and for obvious reasons, the only whisky her husband, Jack Daniel, would drink was the one with his name. Convinced her husband was too stubborn for his own good, Mrs. Daniel spent quite some time trying to get her

husband to at least consider other brands. Finally, after years of friendly prodding, Jack consented to give our whisky a try. Now, according to Mrs. Daniel, Maker's Mark is the only whisky Jack Daniel drinks.

Well, I was so tickled by her story that for a brief instant I considered leaking it to one of those supermarket tabloids. Fortunately for Mr. and Mrs. Daniel, I came to my senses.

Of course, I'm not surprised that Jack Daniel prefers Maker's Mark. We've won over many converts to our smooth, handcrafted bourbon, once they tried it.

But, to like it enough to give up the chance to order a fine whiskey that bears your own name...

well, I guess that says more about our bourbon than I ever could.

*Bill Samuels, Jr.*

Bill Samuels, Jr.  
President  
Maker's Mark Distillery

**Maker's**  
 **Mark®**

Maker's Mark Distillery, Loretto, KY 40037, 45% Alc./Vol. (90 Proof), Fully Matured.





## Crime in the City

# Attack of the Lesbian Avengers

And other true accounts from the NYPD files

### June 24, 1994

► Victim observed his ex-wife, 2 sons and daughter near his car. He observed his children flattening his tires. As he approaches, wife starts stabbing him with scissors, sons beat him with baseball bats. They rob him of his wallet & keys as they beat him. Neighborhood residents come to his aid. He is treated and released. Victim divorced 2.5 years & is remarried.

introduced himself to 2 girls as "Mr. Goody," a lifeguard, and offered them free swimming lessons. While in the pool, he fondled them.

### July 22, 1994

► For an unknown reason, aided had attached a pair of handcuffs to his nether region. While taking them off, he broke the inner mechanism, rendering the key useless.

was on the ground." The collector got out of the car to investigate. While doing this, someone made off with the violins.

### July 24, 1994

► A driver with a learner's permit and a passenger who was teaching her how to drive struck a stray dog, panicked, turned right, hit a metal divider, bounced off and struck a parked flat bed truck. The dog (a large mutt) fled the scene.

### August 3, 1994

► Police received a call of a fire at Chinatown, Little Italy location. Officers responded to the location, arrived before fire de-

► It has been reported on this date that the New York City Police Department is willing to pay \$300,000 for a diet consultant to help overweight cops lose weight. This report is inaccurate.

### August 13, 1994

► Complainant parked blue Dodge van on corner of Morris St. and West St. and left to go sightseeing with his family. When complainant returned, he discovered his property missing: one suitcase with clothing and 1 brown dachshund in a carrying case.

### August 14, 1994

► The body of a parks department employee was found inside the clean water tank of Lasker Pool, a 3 foot by 7 foot tank that is part of the filter for the pool. He had swim trunks and goggles on.

### August 15, 1994

► Police officers on routine patrol stopped a gray van for a traffic violation. Police officers observed driver had over 200 bootleg copies of *The Lion King* in van. En route to the station house, suspect offered police officers the tapes and all the money he had—\$21. Suspect repeated offer in station house, which was electronically recorded.

### August 17, 1994

► Approximately 8–10 females belonging to the "Lesbian Avengers" were able to sneak into the studios of the Spanish Broadcasting System and briefly seized and broadcast, in Spanish, protest of how the station reflects the problems of the gay and lesbian community. They were on air for about 30 seconds, then a station employee cut off the protest with music. The protesters then exited the studios before police arrived. No injuries and the station management does not want to press charges.



There has been an ongoing dispute regarding money, property & frequent visits to family court.

### June 29, 1994

► A mausoleum was broken into at above location (Cypress Hills Cemetery), 5 caskets were opened. The head was sawed off one of the bodies and taken.

### July 11, 1994

► A vehicle traveling east-bound on Atlantic Ave. was cut off, lost control, jumped a curb, went through a fence, landed on train tracks and was struck by the Long Island Rail Road train. The driver received minor injuries.

### July 11, 1994

► A suspect at a public pool in-

After 2 hours, he called the police who removed him to St. Lukes. ESU truck 2 arrived with "The Wizard," the tool used previously to remove a young boy's hand from a dough-mixing machine. After a short time and a steady hand, the cuffs were removed. (Once again ESU frees a little fellow. This time the wizard was used for a wand).

### July 22, 1994

► A violinist and a Japanese violin collector were driving along in a Rolls Royce when they realized they had a flat tire (corner of 57th & 8th). The driver got out to call for help while the collector sat in the car, guarding a \$1.75 million Stradivarius and a \$.25 million Joseph Rocca. An unknown male approached and told the collector that "money

partment and ran to the 4th floor apartment where the smoke was coming from. They entered the apartment thinking that there may be aided persons inside. Instead the joint was rolling in cannabis. The police found 400 marijuana plants. It appeared that the apartment was used solely as a greenhouse for the plants. Fire put out the blaze but they did not inhale.

### August 11, 1994

► Officer was being treated for the cut to his right shin, suffered during a drug arrest, when the suspect threw a bicycle, striking the officer in the leg. While being treated at the hospital, he was given an insulin shot instead of a tetanus shot.



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**DEAR DIARY:** Stayed up all night doing what all good Condé Nastlers have been doing this week—reading *Newhouse*, the new biography of King Si by Thomas Maier. There were a few references that made me very curious, so I called St. Martin's, who put me in touch with the author, and damned if I didn't get the full texts of the two letters I was looking for. I didn't think I could be surprised, but...

# The Mice That Roared

First, imagine if you can, King Si as an awkward young college sophomore, leading, as he refers to it, a "semi-playboy existence." The wealthy, soon-to-be heir of a newspaper syndicate

suddenly found himself blackballed by his fraternity for, of all things, writing an editorial about postwar Russia. His first lesson in the power of print seems to have affected him greatly, as he wrote to Allard Lowenstein: "I have never had so many low periods (remember my old talk of suicide, well, I was thinking of it again)... I'm sure if you were here you would notice some change [in me]."

Second, in a letter "photocopied at the Ronald Reagan Library," the 32-year-old *Vanity Fair* editor Tina Brown actually offered Nancy Reagan "an early opportunity to approve the photos and text" for a piece that "shows marriages that last are always more interesting than those that don't."

Perhaps I'm just being naive and idealistic.

Yes, this was in 1986, and maybe it's done more often in this business than I realize, but young Tina is saying, *Don't worry Nancy—if you don't like it, I'll change it.* Nancy Reagan, editor? Isn't the first law of journalism that you don't let your subject control a story? Since this was the beginning of the legendary *Vanity Fair* turnaround, you have to ask: Is this how she did it? And where, one wonders, did she draw the line? At residing First Families? Zillionaire socialites? Hollywood's hottest properties? It was at former First Ladies, apparently. (We'll never know exactly, since letters like this don't usually get preserved in amber—and of course, Tina, in her present incarnation as hard-assed journalist, has always denied that they exist.)

What does it say about the reigning grande dame of magazine editing, the soon-to-be high priestess of the *New Yorker*, that once the Reagans were out of power, Tina's tone went from fawning and accommodating to high-minded and tough? She even went so far as to sic Leslie Bennetts, *VF*'s mother superior of "quality journalism," on them, reporting that Mrs. Reagan had withdrawn her support for the L.A.-based charity Phoenix House. Then, in a move with which Freud would have a heyday, Tina stepped into Nancy's role at the charity to great applause. She was the organizing force of what became a "Just Say Yes" party. You know, I was in high school when Tina wrote one of her few bylined pieces, "The Mouse That Roared," about Princess Di. Who's the mouse here?

My father says you learn most about people from what they do at moments of maximum stress, from their turning points. So we have two correspondences: a portrait of a mogul as a young man—who maybe decided early on to give readers what they want and transmuted all that melancholy into the industry sphinx who makes and breaks his editors and publishers at will and seemingly at random. And then there's Tina, the then-rising star with a penchant for brownnosing. Put them together and they meld into...the key powers of Magazine Heaven.

Whereas, incidentally, the internecine feuds with Hearst are really at an all-time high. In

**VANITY FAIR**

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Dear Mrs. Reagan:

I am writing to ask if you and the President would be kind enough to agree to being photographed by Lord Seawood for a special feature in *Vanity Fair*.

The title of the feature is "Staying Married is the Best Revenge," and it celebrates couples who stand for enduring devotion in an age of divorce and, of course, you and the President are the nation's example of this kind of devotion. Some of the other couples Lord Seawood wishes to photograph are Mr. and Mrs. William F. Buckley, Mr. and Mrs. William Styren, Mr. and Mrs. Bob Hope, Mr. and Mrs. Herman F. Taylor, Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Liberman and Anne Crowley and Jessica Tandy. This would be a picture story, with a short introduction explaining our premise—that marriages that last are always more interesting than those that don't and that staying married is the best rebuttal to people who say that marriage is a thing of the past.

With success!—I would like to offer you an early opportunity to approve the photos and text. I do hope, Mrs. Reagan, you will find time to your busy schedule to participate in what will be a delightful and inspiring portfolio.

Yours sincerely,  
Tina Brown  
Tina Brown

Mrs. Ronald Reagan  
The White House  
Washington, D. C. 20500

TS:el

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this corner is the towering inferno, Ron "I'll be really nice this time" Galotti. Inviting comparisons to a bobbing duck at a shooting gallery, Diane Oshin, *Vogue's* former ad director, has been ejected by Ron for the second (count 'em) time. Initially bid adieu from Hearst's *Country Living* when Ron was publisher *there*, Oshin has graduated to what would appear to be a safe haven at Time, Inc., where Galotti is not likely to follow. You see, with the expected retirement of Reg "The Leprechaun" Brack, it's clear that Time is ridding itself of short people.

But Ron is feeling calmer these days. He's been spotted with a model who is roughly six percent taller than he—shockingly, this figure also represents *Vogue's* advertising decline this year to date. I understand that he is his usual serene self when it comes to his soon-to-be ex-wife's much-discussed dealings with industry rivals.

And then there's the extremely modern publisher of *Harper's Bazaar*, *Marie Claire*, and *Town & Country*, Anne Sutherland Fuchs. As we all know, Anne used to be the publisher of *Vogue* before she was displaced by Ron. She emerged from her comfortable exile into senior vice presidency of Condé Nast cyberspace rejuvenated and even more insufferable. Ready and eager, in other words, to walk across the street to Hearst. Now in fighting trim, including her most potent weapon—her searing halitosis—she's giving Ron a fight, though he scored some points recently by pointing out that, "She's had three jobs in five years." Whereas he's had...three jobs in five years.

And while I'm on the subject, what about the sins of omission? King Si's absence from *Vanity Fair's* report on the new power elite is, shall we say, a little conspicuous. I mean, he only owns the leading lifestyle magazine group in the country, the fourth-largest newspaper company, and the largest book publisher. All's fair in love and *VF*, except when it comes to respecting your boss' wish for anonymity—even when that conflicts with the premise of your story. Maybe I'm in the wrong business.

—Pam Hunter



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IT HAD BEEN FERMENTING in my subconscious for a while, but it didn't hit me full-on until I opened the August issue of *Vanity Fair*—you know, the one with Cindy Crawford in the “Little Spermaid” pose on the cover—to reveal a four-page gatefold Anne Klein ad that is overwhelmingly Human League-esque. On the very first page of the ad, beneath a picture of a girl getting out of a DeLorean, for chrissakes, is the legend A PORTFOLIO PHOTOGRAPHED BY STEPHEN MEISEL. Presumably so you don't start wondering why they dug up a bunch of old Helmut Newton pix.

# Eightysomething

**Forget the seventies; the decade you love to hate is back.**

The black-and-white photographs portray models with super-blown hair, wearing satin shirts and narrow peg pants as well as black stiletto heels with black stockings (black being the official color of the era). Their makeup and styling is vintage Duran Duran album cover, circa *Rio*. The whole effect is rather disconcerting, and one might be tempted to shrug it off were it not for other compelling evidence.

Apparently, five years of abstinence, austerity, and understatement is all anyone can stand before a backlash is in full swing. It's time now to break out the spandex and get happy again. Welcome to the neo-eighties.

Skeptics might be quick to dismiss this as a passing phase—merely the latest in a series of fashion's *frissons*, like body piercing and platform shoes. Admittedly, it would be nice if all we had to do was wait for the cover of the next Pearl Jam CD to bear an uncanny resemblance to the Eurythmics' *Be Yourself Tonight*, followed by a story on neo-eighties chic in *Newsweek*, and then we could call it a day.

Unfortunately, it won't be so easy.

Take, for example, big new comedy star and cover boy, Jim Carrey. To whom has Carrey, with his back-to-back hits *Ace Ventura* and *The Mask*, been compared? None other than eighties comedy phenom Eddie Murphy with *his* back-to-

back hits *48 HRS* and *Trading Places*. How apropos. The fact that Carrey has landed the role of the Riddler in the next Batman movie augurs quite well for his popularity to outlast its current voguishness; similarly, the fact that the men's fall collections are featuring “new” skinny ties and narrow-lapelled suits goes a long way toward establishing the neo-eighties as more than a flash in the pan.

Still not convinced? Consider the following: Bret Easton Ellis has a brand new book out, *The Informers*. What could it be about? If you guessed Los Angeles in the eighties, you win the Depêche Mode single of your choice. Getting sick of hearing about celebrity offspring and aspiring lounge act Donovan Leitch? Too bad. Leitch, with his nebulous fame and androgynous cross-dressing antics, is the perfect neo-eighties poster boy. His cheesy, Hungry-Like-The-Wolf pose is right on time—not to mention the fact that he can't even sing.

**What's more,** eco-conscious nineties curiosities such as holistic and homeopathic medicine have given way to more neo-eighties-style remedies: shoe-buying is the new aromatherapy. Just check out the shoe salon at Henri Bendel some Saturday. On the surface, it's merely a feeding frenzy; in actuality, it's a healthy, happy, feel-good neo-eighties environment where the purchase of a new pair of pumps can do wonders that weed-sniffing can only aspire to. Just ask nightclub fixture and shoe designer Kevin Jennings: “For some of these women, it's better than sex.”

A recent issue of *W* magazine reveals just how deeply neo-eighties sensibilities have insidiously penetrated our culture. We are told that Donna Karan's best-seller during a \$650,000 week at Bergdorf Goodman was a neon-pink velour jacket (neon being the official noncolor of the neo-eighties), price: \$1,350. Flipping through the magazine, we find a full-page Partnership for a Drug-Free America ad that shouts, “COCAINE LIES.” Yes, cocaine has been reinstated as the ultimate neo-eighties hors d'oeuvre. And what's this I see at the bottom of the ad: “© 1987 DDB Needham Worldwide”?





So the whole thing is just a recycled relic—a perfect metaphor for the entire neo-eighties phenomenon!

But it's not only photography, fashion, and noxious nightclub acts that are exhibiting the classic symptoms of neo-eighties madness. In spite of tired nineties ideas about modesty and restraint (or maybe because of them), business is booming. I picked up an issue of *Time*—not, mind you, out of habit—but because of a diamond-in-the-rough piece that stated: "Entire industries, from railroads to banks, are being reshaped by a round of mergers that make the eighties look tame.... The pace of takeovers today already rivals the most frantic years of the eighties."

I hadn't given it much thought before, but I suppose that the new and improved neo-eighties will make the genuine article look lackluster in comparison. After all, what's the point of being revisionist if you can't do everything bigger, better, and more outrageous? Eighties excess was alright, but neo-eighties excess will be *fabulous*. "Greed! Corporate intrigue! Betrayal!" the *Time* piece exclaimed. "Now it can be said: the nineties were never meant to be the decade of small appetites."

Purveyors and peons alike of what passes for haute couture are understandably reluctant to admit that their industry is about as stable as Shannen Doherty—a pinwheel blown about relentlessly by the winds of change every time a half dozen people simultaneously decide that something is "cool." They seem especially reluctant to concede the dawning of the neo-eighties. And who could blame them? That the eighties were a tasteful period or the height of hip is not a popularly held view. Apparently, it is not yet acceptable to be revisionist about the eighties and to admit that they might have more of a shelf life than originally expected.

**One unwitting neo-eighties** beneficiary is Paris, France. You may not be inclined to think of Paris as a backwater, but in music at least, they've always been stranded somewhere west of Bumfuck, Nebraska (with one exception: MC Solaar, and yes, Vanessa Paradis is pret-

ty cute). When I was living in Paris last year, the hottest concert tickets in town were Blue Oyster Cult and Toto, and the sound system of the local Franprix played Journey endlessly. At the time I thought they were hilariously *recherché*, but now it seems that they were really prescient in their musical tastes. Oh well, *plus ça change*...

Back home in New York City we had A Flock of Seagulls headlining at the Limelight, of all places. One reviewer recalled the time when bands like the Seagulls "said more with a haircut than Pearl Jam has with countless cover stories." Not to worry; that time is nigh again. Just last Saturday, in fact, up in the Thierry Mugler room at Club USA, I observed one club kid admonish his companion thusly: "No, no! You have to dance *eighties*." Naturally, he proceeded to demonstrate (to the lilting strains of Kim Carnes' classic "Bette Davis Eyes"). And this was after a friend told me that he had participated in the ultimate neo-eighties ritual, snorting a line of coke in the bathroom stall at the Tunnel Club. Ah, but it's good to be home.

As I peruse the *Interview* article on Marc Jacobs' new collection (a sample: "I like to give shoulder once in a while. I think David Bowie said 'Shoulder pads are the bell-bottoms of the eighties'"), sip my Perrier, try to get my broker on the line, and slap Fixx's *Reach the Beach* into my CD player, I contemplate the words of cultural critic Umberto Eco.

In his assault on the modern world of January 1987, published in the British newspaper *The Independent*, Eco wisely said: "Today in Pompeii tourists are visiting murals depicting Romans with huge penises; originally meant as adverts for brothels, they are now considered great art. In the eighteenth century, Telemann was thought a greater composer than Bach; in the nineteenth, Eugene Sue a greater writer than Balzac. In 200 years we may consider Picasso inferior to the man currently responsible for the Coca-Cola commercials."

The moral of the story is, don't be afraid of the neo-eighties. The emperor *is* wearing new clothes—they just happen to be made out of vinyl, rubber, and spandex.—*Jared Paul Stern*

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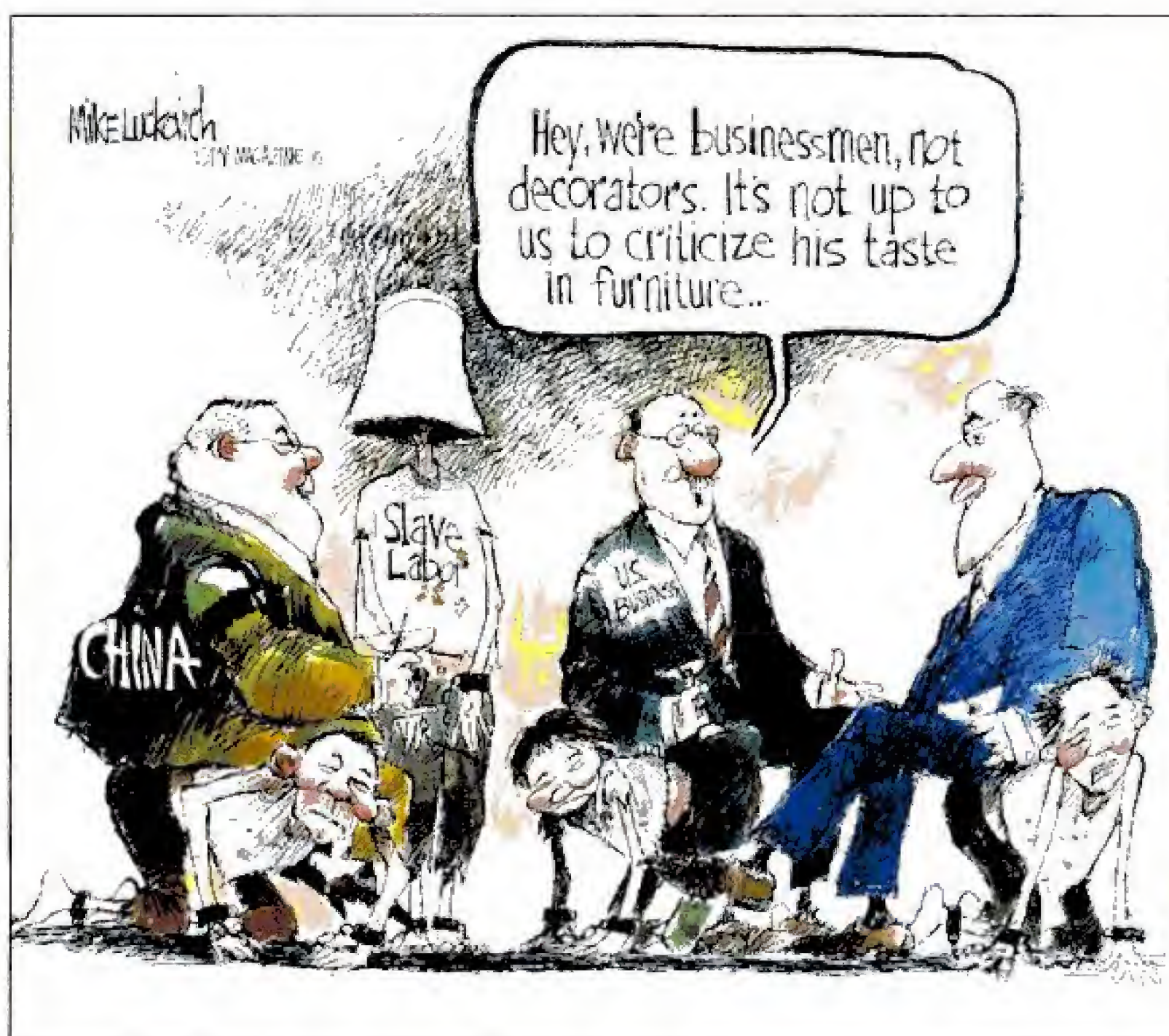
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# Re-education Through Labor

A billion apple-eaters can't be wrong—can they?

ONE IS NIBBLING on one's morning scone, sipping one's latte, and skimming the *Journal* when one notices that financial news has uncomfortably veered away from housing slowdowns and rocky pharmaceutical stocks. "To have Western standards," declares Chrysler chairman Robert J. Eaton. "That's absolutely ridiculous."



One's hands begin to shake. Multicultural creep on the Dow?

Oh, *phew*, nothing like that. Eaton is just pulling the proverbial rug out from under a Chinese employee, Gao Feng, who was arrested on suspicion of being a Christian and then, upon his release, was fired for missing work without a reasonable explanation. "We can't assume [Gao] is 100 percent right and the government is 100 percent wrong," explains Eaton, demonstrating his American verve for due process and the democratic way. "We're a minority shareholder in a [joint-venture] company. We can't dictate."

Eaton is gearing up for his late-summer trip to China with 24 other top corporate executives and commerce secretary Ron Brown. It's the glorious consummation of the recent Clinton directive to de-link human rights policy from trade policy. After years of a forced interest in China, American business is now free to stop worrying about prisoners of conscience and "re-education through labor." Clinton has decided to let business be business.

But somehow there are still all these pesky media distractions. First the truant Christian is demanding his job back—loudly. Then comes an all-too-credible report that Chrysler's joint-venture company, Beijing Jeep, has been quietly (but not quietly enough) contracting work out to Beijing Autoworks Industrial Corporation [BAIC], a known prison labor outfit.

"What is a labor camp?" says Franc Krebs, president of Beijing Jeep, responding to the charge. "I've never been able to find one myself." After the allegations are specifically articulated—*Oh, THAT labor camp*—Krebs adopts Eaton's I'm-no-authoritarian rap. "We have kind of a distant relationship with BAIC," he says. "I don't go into his shop and tell him how to run it."

To go into another man's shop and demand, say, a halt to the use of electric whips and "punishment beds"? To insist on protection from 180-degree flames and on bandages for open baton wounds? How Western; how absolutely ridiculous.

"We're businessmen and we're playing our role," insists Hewlett-Packard's Jim Whittaker. "Certain issues are really government-to-government issues, and are being dealt with, some more successfully than others. It's the federal government that should be reflecting the human rights policies. I don't believe U.S. business should be a message carrier or an arm of the federal government."

For a strict nonpartisan, however, with only a vague sense of the human rights climate in

ILLUSTRATION FOR SPY BY MIKE LUCKOVICH



China ("there have been ups and downs; things seem to be improving, and then things are not improving and so on"), Whittaker is terrifically eloquent on the plight of the Chinese leadership. "The Premier was over in Europe," he says. "He canceled a number of meetings because of protesters, and I guess he got a little upset, and he challenged publicly all European leaders. He said, 'I'll gladly exchange you my job. I'm trying to run a 1.2 billion-person economy and we want to grow, but we don't want to be unstable. It's a real challenge.'"

### Ignorance Is Profitable

Instability is the hobgoblin of all great institutions, which perhaps explains the palpable empathy for the Chinese government that is emanating from American corporations. "China is striving to become a full and respected member of the international community of nations," declared a consortium of nine multinationals (AT&T, Boeing, Chrysler, Digital, Kodak, GE, Honeywell, Motorola, and TRW) in a letter sent last spring to the White House. The U.S. Association of Importers of Textiles and Apparel similarly told Congress, "We have seen dramatic progress in China, both in its economy and in its human rights environment." And the National Retail Federation's Robert Hall trumpeted its analysis that "the new engagement policy is clearly working."

Don't assume that these people are actual fools. Sounding dumb may just be their strategy. "Human rights begin with the basics," reads a Washington State Business Coalition press release, "including basic foods like those exported from Washington to China. 'Imagine if 1.2 billion Chinese each had an apple a day,' said Tom Mathison, president of Stemilt Growers."

Yes, of course. It must be a tactic. They must be concocting this prattle for a reason. Otherwise, why would they say such things? After all, anyone can read Amnesty International's blunt analysis that "there has been no fundamental change in the government's human rights policy" in the past five years; that with as many as 40,000 executions

last year, China was once again the gold medalist in rolling heads; that many of those not killed on the spot are held indefinitely without being charged or tried, without legal representation, and are frequently treated to lengthy beatings, electric shock, psychiatric torture, excruciating labor and solitary confinement in cells about the size of a first class airline seat.

"...Feng Haiguang was subjected to two more beatings, where police electric whips and electric batons were used," recounts one prisoner in a letter smuggled to Amnesty. "Five political prisoners were locked up in [tiny] punishment cells, and each ordered to deliver at least 10,000 bricks per day."

The reason is simply that it pays not to know. Eaton et al. could easily keep up to speed on detailed reports of abuse, such as "...this caused Jiang's toe-nails to split, reducing his toes to bloody lumps." But in this case the ignorance is profitable.

"They have chosen not to be fully knowledgeable," says a senior congressional staffer familiar with the issue, "because if they were fully knowledgeable, they might not be willing to do some of things that they're doing. Someone comes up and says, 'Did you know that the person who's producing these textiles is doing prison labor?' They say, 'No, we didn't know that. How could we know that? We're not responsible for all of our little production subsidiaries.'"

### Multicultural Creep

Meanwhile, back in Washington, the corporate interest in government-to-government dealings is quite active. "I've never seen the kind of intensive corporate presence on Capitol Hill that we saw this past spring, leading up to the MFN [Most Favored Nation] decision," says Mike Jendrzeczyk, Washington director of Human Rights Watch. "Congressional offices were being deluged by CEOs, presidents of banks, you name it."

"The pressure up here was incredible," confirms the congressional staffer. "It was just amazing. There's money on the line—that's what this is all about."

A lot of money. A lot.

"We estimate that in ten years our cumulative sales to China will reach \$158 billion, assuming normalized relations," the nine-CEO coalition wrote to Clinton, pressing for a "long term solution to the China MFN and human rights conundrum." Other lobbyists explained that early in the next century, China is likely to become the world's biggest market.

Those sorts of dollar figures naturally make a person a little giddy; one might forget for a moment about international standards of decency and say a few things that, to Western ears, seem absolutely ridiculous. "Low and middle income American families," warned Macy's chairman Myron E. Ullman III last spring, "will face higher prices and shortages of many familiar items" if Clinton insists on drawing a line in the sand on behalf of the persecuted Chinese democrats and intellectuals.

What items of critical importance was he speaking of? National Retail Federation's Robert Hall later clarified that they foresaw "a heavy burden on American consumers" due to tariffs on footwear, toys, and men's trousers.

Ridiculous, but it worked. American access to slave-labor slacks remains unimpeded; for the first time in years, a president has had the courage to stand up and guarantee business that such vital access to cheap labor will not be sacrificed in the name of rigid Western standards of free speech, press, religion, and so on (ad nauseam). With this key victory in hand, American business is pressing for more. "Now they're trying to get OPIC [Overseas Private Investment Corporation] guarantees to go into China," says the congressional staffer. "Why the American taxpayer should have to underwrite these business risks is beyond me."

Now, imagine not 1.2 billion apple-eaters per day, but 5 billion. Imagine the whole world, de-linked. Lobbyists representing foreign ventures in Indonesia, India, and other non-western countries agree: Human rights begin with the basics. Let's be reasonable, and not too Western.

—David Shenk



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**IN THE FUTURE**, when men gather around the Duraflame to talk about the great Fears and the supreme Perils of their lives, I intend to stand up and announce, quietly, and without undue pride or shame, "At the age of eighteen I almost died sitting next to a quart of clams." Naturally, an uproar will ensue. When it subsides, and whoever is still left in the room or the sweat lodge or the cave or the inpatient psychiatric facility says the appropriate thing ("Clams don't come in quarts, moron"), I will add: "And I wasn't even all that scared."



The clams were shucked and bobbing around in a brine-filled plastic container on the seat beside me when, while driving through a rainstorm on Baltimore's Jones Falls Expressway, I decided to pass the slowpoke car in front. I gave my mother's Pontiac the gas, eased into the left-hand lane, and—as in a dream—hydroplaned into a mad, giddy, life-threatening 360-degree spin. "Gently pump the brakes"? "Turn in the direction of the skid"? Forget it. Rather, "Sit there like a child on an amusement park ride, firmly grip the useless wheel, and prepare to die, with your clams, like a man."

But let us leave me there, spinning and gripping and hurtling in tons of metal and glass like the helpless victim of a physics problem, and let us now consider the not-dead me 25 years later, i.e., last August. I'm in a small commercial jet; the captain has just turned on the seatbelt sign in preparation for our landing. As usual it seems 20 minutes too early for all this, but still, our seat-backs are up, our tray tables are in the upright and locked position.

Suddenly we bank to the right, dip sharply like a jeep driving into a ditch, and veer up and around—a brief departure from the expected, yes, but that's all. No tilting cabin, no shrieking passengers, no cascade of personal belongings shifting during the flight onto one's head, no emergency oxygen masks dropping like deformed plastic spiders. A half-minute later we level off nicely and resume our descent into the whatever-it-is area.

**But here's the thing.** During the few (uncharged, not-all-that frantic, rather bland) moments following that plunge-and-recovery, I experienced a hot gastric spurt of terror and found myself thinking, if not in so many words, "Wake up, chump. You could DIE." Whereas in the spinning car I felt, for whatever reason...vast reserves of physical courage? No—fearless and composed. Rather than jab and bully myself with artificial tough-guy thoughts, I watched the landscape revolve past sideways (the median guard rail visible straight ahead

PAUL CORIO



through my windshield: interesting) and thought about "life."

Not the actual word "life," of course, which is completely beneath me intellectually, as it is you and all your friends. This word is lost to us, alas—having become the cliché of low-brow sentimentality (Melanie Griffith after Don: *I still believe in Life!*). Or middlebrow sentimentality (Pavarotti at the Hollywood Bowl: *A Celebration of Life!*). Now, you and I, for the most part, use the word "life" in its technical, scientific sense, e.g., "The scientist had a nice life."

The only other time I think about "life" is when I hear phrases like "life is worth living," which makes even less sense to me than "happy is good being" or "around is fun running." If life is *not* worth living, what is it worth? Trying just once? Skipping entirely? Politely declining in favor of something less—you know—inconvenient?

But if I couldn't, while spinning to my doom, think about "life," I could nonetheless ponder deeply. "Geez, these sorts of accidents really *do* happen," I reflected. "And this is how." I wheeled around helplessly in the great big car and thought, "I wonder how this will turn out."

So, a person could ask, what's the deal? An airplane incident less strenuous than Mr. Toad's Wild Ride has me bracing for the worst, while a car spin-out worthy of a Driver's Ed. horror reel finds me ruminating in an airy manner. Ironic, no?

No. The true life-threatening experience happened too fast to react to, even for my revved-up, don't-give-a-damn, 18-year-old teen-on-a-clam-spree sensibilities. The whole thing, from spinout to impact—and there *was* impact—took about four seconds. Like a skid on ice, it was fun while it lasted. And while I could have sustained severe injury or been totally killed, instead I ended up plowing into the median rail *backwards*, facing upstream into mercifully sparse traffic. I was fine. The clams were fine. Did I then fall to my knees and weep desperate thanks to whatever god I held dear, resolving thenceforth to appreciate

existence itself and live life to the fullest?

No. For one thing, I hate the phrase "live life to the fullest," probably because I do not live life to the fullest. Does anyone? As a matter of fact, the late Malcolm Forbes, we are given to believe, lived life to the fullest. Apparently the epitaph on his tombstone or burial urn or mausoleum welcome mat is something like: "While alive, he lived." This was the journalistic consensus about Forbes with which we, the dumb bastard reading public, were clubbed at the time of his death: that he appreciated and savored and enjoyed "life" more than everybody else put together.

What was his secret? A boundless

**Thus it is possible to come this close to death and yet feel no Fear—indeed, to emerge just as callow and petty as you were before. This, in my older, more mature opinion, is unfortunate. No Fear? No Fair! I want to be utterly transformed.**

vitality, a puckish sense of humor, and an inheritance of millions of dollars. With these he vitally, puckishly bought and flew hot air balloons and bombed around on motorcycles with Elizabeth Taylor. In the basement of the *Forbes* magazine offices was—is—a bar, where the great and the near-great came to quaff and where they were presented with a stein, which would remain *in situ* for future visits and on which their famous names were handsomely engraved. Could any life be lived more fully?

From Forbes' eulogizers, who uniformly spoke of his "zest for living," we learn that the way to live life to the fullest is to spend a bundle on hobbies. Life is worth living because up in the air is fun flying and around is cool zooming and out with celebrities is neat hanging.

I drew no such inspiration from my mishap, and instead immediately start-

ed grouching because the car had gone dead. I turned the key and nothing happened. I was pissed off and indignant! Then I noticed it was still in Drive; I threw it into Park, and she turned over like a champ. And off I went on my merry way like the ingrate that I was. At home, I noted with interest that two of the tires had no, zero, absolutely not a trace of tread. So it wasn't my fault.

Thus it is possible to come this close to death and and yet feel no Fear—indeed, to emerge just as callow and petty afterwards as you were before. This, in my older, more mature opinion, is unfortunate. No Fear? No Fair! I want to be deeply shaken and utterly transformed. Which brings us to the plane, where there was ample time, not only to experience Fear, but to feel it ebb and to go chasing after it. Surrounded by other passengers who were either oblivious of or indifferent to what was happening (which was essentially nothing), I gave myself a good talking-to. I didn't mind telling myself that the entire world-historical Machine of Fatal Accidents that had for centuries been busily mowing down other people could, for no good reason, come grinding after me. I insisted that I "take seriously" the possibility that something awful really could happen. Look at how it almost did, almost!

I was, in other words, trying to leverage a half-second of Fear and a lot of mental hectoring into a transcendent, soul-shattering experience of rebirth and renewal. "Die! Dead! Look out! Wind shear! Mayday! Tragic mishap!" I beat myself with these words as though with a blackjack, but it was no use. I emerged from the flight completely unchanged, simpering "Thanks!" to the flight attendant as I stepped out and feeling wounded when she didn't smile back.

The result? I still don't live life to the fullest. I still don't truly appreciate this precious gift of existence. And I feel just lousy about it. But maybe, just maybe, the very act of writing about it now w—No. Never mind.

—Ellis Weiner



900 MHz breakthrough!

# New technology launches wireless speaker revolution...

Recoton develops breakthrough technology which transmits stereo sound through walls, ceilings and floors up to 150 feet.

By Charles Anton

If you had to name just one new product "the most innovative of the year," what would you choose? Well, at the recent *International Consumer Electronics Show*, critics gave Recoton's new wireless stereo speaker system the *Design and Engineering Award* for being the "most innovative and outstanding new product."

Recoton was able to introduce this whole new generation of powerful wireless speakers due to the advent of 900 MHz technology. This newly approved breakthrough enables Recoton's wireless speakers to rival the sound of expensive wired speakers.

**Recently approved technology.** In June of 1989, the *Federal Communications Commission* allocated a band of radio frequencies stretching from 902 to 928 MHz for wireless, in-home product applications. Recoton, one of the world's leading wireless speaker manufacturers, took advantage of the FCC ruling by creating and introducing a new speaker system that utilizes the recently approved frequency band to transmit clearer, stronger stereo signals throughout your home.



**Crisp sound throughout your home.** Just imagine being able to listen to your stereo, TV, VCR or CD player in any room of your home without having to run miles of speaker wire.

Plus, you'll never have to worry about range because the new 900 MHz technology allows

## 150 foot range through walls!

Recoton gives you the freedom to listen to music wherever you want. Your music is no longer limited to the room your stereo is in. With the wireless headphones you can listen to your TV, stereo or CD player while you move freely between rooms, exercise or do other activities. And unlike infrared headphones, you don't have to be in a line-of-sight with the transmitter, giving you a full 150 foot range.

The headphones and speakers have their own built-in receiver, so no wires are needed between you and your stereo. One transmitter operates an unlimited number of speakers and headphones.



Recoton's transmitter sends music through walls to wireless speakers over a 75,000 square foot area.

stereo signals to travel over distances of 150 feet or more through walls, ceilings and floors without losing sound quality.

**One transmitter, unlimited receivers.** The powerful transmitter plugs into a headphone, audio-out or tape-out jack on your stereo or TV component, transmitting music wirelessly to your speakers or headphones. The speakers plug into an outlet. The one transmitter can broadcast to an unlimited number of stereo speakers and headphones. And since each speaker contains its own built-in receiver/amplifier, there are no wires running from the stereo to the speakers.

## Full dynamic range.

The speaker, mounted in a bookshelf-sized acoustically constructed cabinet, provides a two-way bass reflex design for individual bass boost control. Full dynamic range is achieved by the use of a 2" tweeter and 4" woofer. Plus, automatic digital lock-in



Breakthrough wireless speaker design blankets your home with music.

tuning guarantees optimum reception and eliminates drift. The new technology provides static-free, interference-free sound in virtually any environment. These speakers are also self-amplified; they can't be blown out no matter what your stereo's wattage.

**Stereo or hi-fi, you decide.** These speakers have the option of either stereo or hi-fi sound. You can use two speakers, one set on right channel and the other on left, for full stereo separation. Or, if you just want an extra speaker in another room, set it on mono and listen to both channels on one speaker. Mono combines both left and right channels for hi-fi sound. This option lets you put a pair of speakers in the den and get full stereo separation or put one speaker in the kitchen and get complete hi-fi sound.



These wireless stereo headphones have a built-in receiver.

**Factory direct savings.** Our commitment to quality and factory direct pricing allows us to sell more wireless speakers than anyone! For this reason, you can get these speakers far below retail with our 90 day "Dare to Compare" money-back guarantee and full one year manufacturer's warranty. For a limited time, the Recoton transmitter is only \$69. It will operate an unlimited number of wireless speakers priced at \$89 and wireless headphones at \$59 each. Your order will be processed in 72 hours and shipped UPS.

**Recoton Transmitter** (you must have a transmitter to operate speakers and headphones).....\$69 \$4 S&H

Wireless products compatible with the Recoton transmitter:

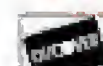
**Recoton Wireless Speaker**.....\$89 \$6 S&H

**Recoton Wireless Headphones**.....\$59 \$4 S&H

Please mention promotional code 161-SY1106

For fastest service call toll-free 24 hours a day

**800-992-2966**



To order by mail send check or money order for the total amount including S&H (VA residents add 4.5% sales tax). Or charge it to your credit card by enclosing your account number and expiration date. Send to:

**CONTRAD INDUSTRIES**

2820 Waterford Lake Drive Suite 106  
Midlothian, Virginia 23113

## AWARD WINNING WIRELESS SPEAKER

Built-in receiver and amplifier:

The wireless speaker and headphones both contain a built-in receiver and amplifier. Signals are picked up and transmitted as far as 150 feet away through walls without the use of wires.



**Don't take our word for it.** Try it yourself. We're so sure you'll love the new award-winning Recoton wireless speaker system that we offer you the **Dare to Compare Speaker Challenge**. Compare Recoton's rich sound quality to that of any \$200 wired speaker. If you're not completely convinced that these wireless speakers offer the same outstanding sound quality as wired speakers, simply return them within 90 days for a full "No Questions Asked" refund.

Recoton's Design and Engineering Award





## SPY's Undercover Examination of a Thriving Metropolis: Kooky



YOU'VE GOT Mace on your **key chain**, deadbolts on your doors, and a 300-decibel alarm in your car. But it's not enough. To survive in New York—or any city—you need to **protect** your mind as well as your body.

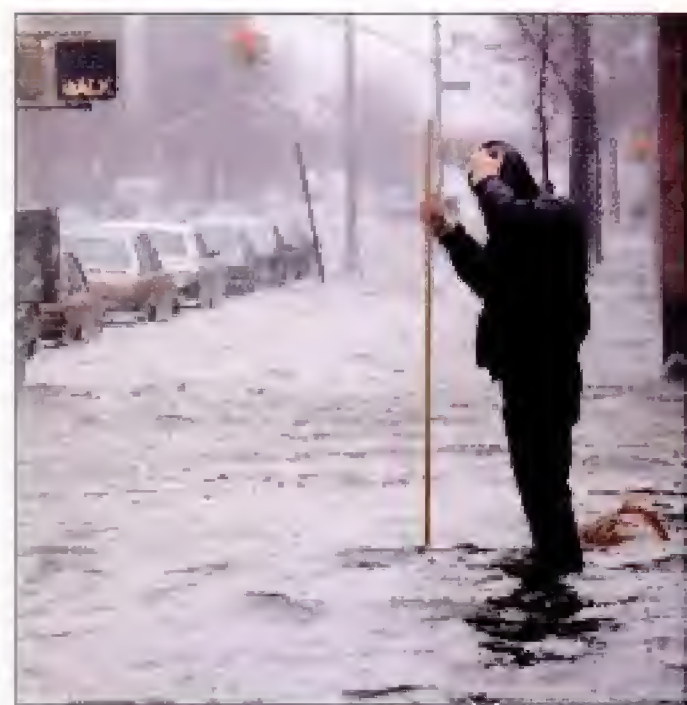
It's not the crime, the noise, or the pollution that will drive you insane—it's



the **little things**, like the theme from *Cats*, the phalanxes of surly flyer distributors on every corner, or the gridlock caused by fanatic demonstrators with axes to grind. And listening to an NYU grad student loudly interpreting a painting in MoMA can fray the nerves of even the most battle-hardened urbanite.

Under Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's regime, the NYPD has begun **cracking down** on pan-

handlers, windshield washers, and thunderous car stereos. SPY salutes this munificent municipal effort, and—as a **public service** to our readers—we identify five more “quality of life” offenders to watch out for.





Fringe Groups. . .Sophisticated Tourists. . .Clever Catcalls. . .

# URBAN VIVAL DE

by Alex Gregory  
and Peter Huyck



## #1. Hip Tourists: Acid Wash with an Urban Attitude

**S**ure, tourists are friendly and polite. And yes, they pour millions into the local economy. But don't let that fool you. They are agents of wanton destruction. They are the people who single-handedly enabled the Hard Rock Café, Planet Hollywood, and the Warner Bros. store to blot our cultural landscape.

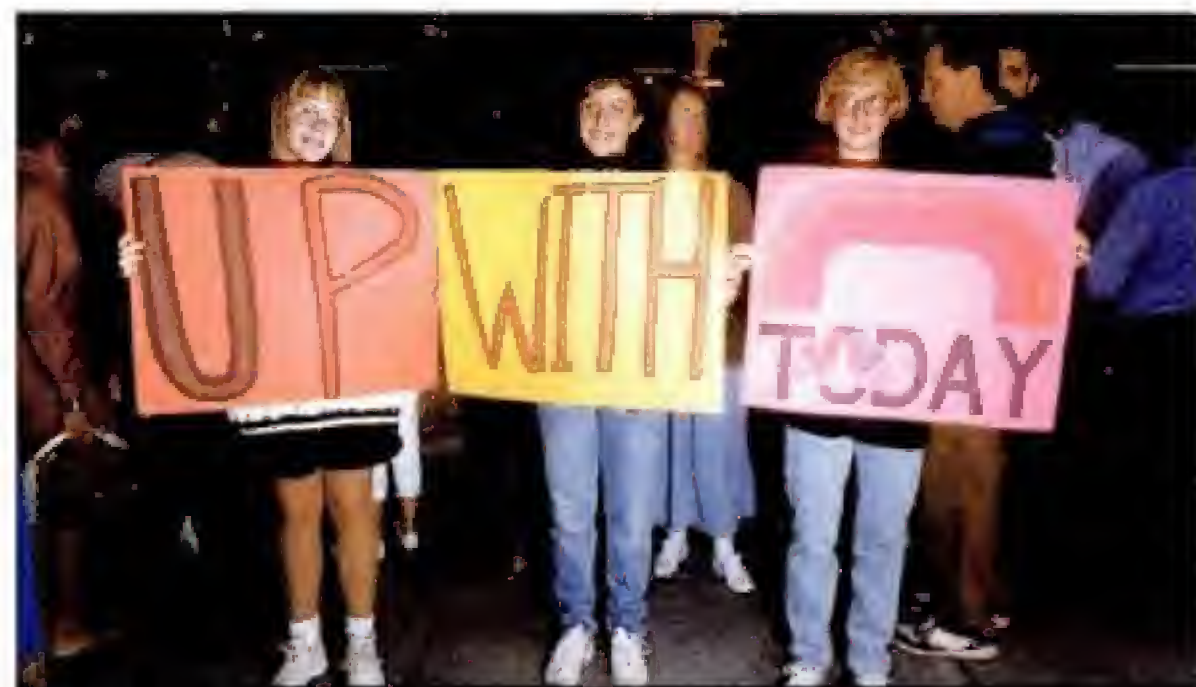
Recently, however, SPY discovered a new, more virulent strain of sightseer waving crudely hand-lettered signs outside the *Today Show* windows. Physically, they resem-

ble their predecessors, but when SPY reporter Bonnie Datt asked them about their vacation plans, we were shocked to find that they had adopted the haughty, world-weary attitude of the natives.

Traditionally, no weekend stay in the Big Apple would be complete without tickets to *Cats*. But those days could soon be memories...

▶ "Cats?" sneered a woman from Oklahoma City. "We saw that years ago. Is the Shakespeare festival still on?"

▶ "I preferred *Sunset Boulevard*, the London production," said



N.Y.'s typical tourists: How long before they're everywhere?

one woman hailing from Portland, Oregon.

▶ "No, I'm going to see *Passion*," replied a middle-aged man from Denver.

But if out-of-towners aren't going to see *Cats* at the Winter Garden, who is? "I did," asserted a man in a cowboy hat and carrying roses to give to Katie Couric. "A friend of mine designed the set for it,

so I've seen it from backstage."

This was a frightening revelation. Are tourists becoming too clever for our "traps"? How can we contain them? Is it just a matter of time before Gramercy Tavern starts printing up T-shirts? The next time visitors ask what to do when they're in town, do your civic duty: send them to F.A.O. Schwartz.



## #2. How to Win Friends and Influence PETA

**T**here are no causes, no matter how noble, worthy of a rush-hour traffic jam. Unfortunately, New York's huge population and world-wide visibility make it a favorite site of picketers, paraders, and protesters from every group of malcontents on earth. And because our Constitution guarantees freedom of assembly, they are free to gather at any time they please—no matter how inconvenient or inappropriate.

Recently, we spotted an announcement in the paper that PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) was planning to demonstrate. To protest cat-vomiting experiments at Rockefeller University Hospital, they would dump 400 pounds of used kitty litter in the street. Clearly, this was going to be an A-list event. Our curiosity piqued, we decided to attend...incognito, of course.

Infiltrating the ranks of an extremist group is not a venture to be taken cavalierly. Given rumors that PETA members had been hauled away in handcuffs from the Maine Lobster Festival, we figured that experiments on vertebrates would be grounds for Molotov cocktails. We donned full-size cat costumes, taped our knuckles, padded our midsections, and braced ourselves for a battle royale.

But when we arrived, we found ourselves in the midst of a protest slightly more modest than we had anticipated. The crowd appeared to be composed of more cat-lovers than hard-core animal suffragists, and cat-lovers, by nature, are more disposed toward gentle scolding than cracking skulls.

We were greeted with



"What kind of kook would make cats puke?" Apparently, not the same type that would attempt to dump 400 pounds of used kitty litter in the driveway of a thriving hospital to protest "cat-vomiting experiments."

suspicious stares as we were led through the barricades by the police. But as we started to chant and gesticulate, a feeling of oneness enveloped the group. Signs and anti-vivisectionist propaganda were thrust into our hands. The news cameras were trained on us.

It was showtime.

"WHAT KIND OF KOOK WOULD MAKE CATS PUKE?!" we screamed. The crowd, who up until our arrival, had been chanting

stale Vietnam-era slogans with the word "cats" inserted, instantly took to our tag line. Within seconds, the entire group was chanting along in unison. "MEOW, MEOW, MEOW, SAVE OUR CATS NOW!" was another big hit of ours, as was, "WHAT ARE WE TO DO? CATS ARE PEOPLE TOO!"

For about five glorious minutes, we tasted the nectar

of leadership. And then a battered white pickup truck, laden with sand, feces, and urine, screeched up in front of the entrance gate to the hospital. Sitting on top of the festering mound was a figure



...Scary Art Critics... And Hey—You Can't Even *Give Money A*





clad in army fatigues and a gas mask, clutching a shovel. The ringers had arrived.

No sooner had the tailgate been unlatched than the cops pounced on the manure-spreader, slammed him to the ground, and cuffed him. While this was happening, a second accomplice started frantically shoveling the kitty litter, but was quickly interrupted in a similar fashion. We tried valiantly to rouse the crowd with a chant of "LET'S GO, CATS!" but our Svengali-like hold on the masses had evaporated.

No longer were we the most enthusiastic, inanely dressed, or loudest members of the movement; in a matter of seconds, the leadership of this protest had passed back to the insiders.

We opened up the barricades and walked over to get a closer look at the arrestees, who were lying silent and handcuffed on the ground, gas masks still in place.

"Is there anything we can do to help?" we asked the attendant police officers.

"Get the hell back behind the goddamn barricade," they suggested. One burly officer escorted my partner a tad too rapidly, causing him to catch a barricade in the testes. While he was writhing on the pavement in agony, the head PETA representative, an intense woman with severely cropped hair, leaned over to lend him assistance.

"Quick," she said. "Get up before the media gets hold of this!" He continued to writhe in position.

"My balls," he moaned.

"Roll!" she pleaded. "Get in here!" I helped him to his feet and through the barricade. "Who are you guys?" she asked.

"Alex and Pete," we responded. "We love cats."

"Bless you," she replied. She turned around and picked up the pink tail that had fallen off my partner's costume. She held it aloft for the crowd to behold. "This is what they do to cats in this place!" she bellowed.

We took that as our exit cue. As we walked away from the hubbub, we reflected on our foray into the world of activism. As far as fringe elements go, PETA probably has the highest average SAT scores and the most widespread political acceptance of any group this side of Greenpeace. Yet with minimal effort, we had actually induced them to meow in public.

Maybe this whole freedom of assembly thing isn't such a hot idea after all.



Our SPY reporters discover their money's not good enough.

## #3. A Flyer in Hand Is Worth...

If you've ever ducked, dodged, swerved, or leaped to avoid being handed a coupon by a sidewalk flyer pusher, you are not alone. New Yorkers may willingly endure ear-splitting noise and carcinogenic air, but we are very protective of our personal space. So who are these paper vendors, and why are they here? Does hand-to-hand advertising work?

"Oh, yes. Definitely," say Yifat and Limor, two recent émigrés from Israel who hand out Ranch 1 ("The Best Grilled Chicken Sandwich on Earth©") coupons for ten hours a day, holding court on the corner of Twenty-third Street and Park Avenue South.

"We catch people as they are standing on line to get into the subway, or we block them on the street," said Limor. "Between the two of us, we hand out about 4,000 flyers a day."

"It's not a tough job," added Yifat. "Americans go

totally crazy for coupons."

Do we really? Being the crack investigative journalists that we are, SPY decided to test New Yorkers' receptiveness to sidewalk distributors. But rather than hand out pieces of paper, we figured we'd up the ante and hand out cold, hard cash.

Carrying boxes full of shiny nickels, we took to the streets. Reactions were varied. Many people appreciatively grabbed the coins. Others stopped to ask why. And a surprisingly large percentage ducked, dodged, swerved, and leaped to avoid a five-cent gain in personal net worth.

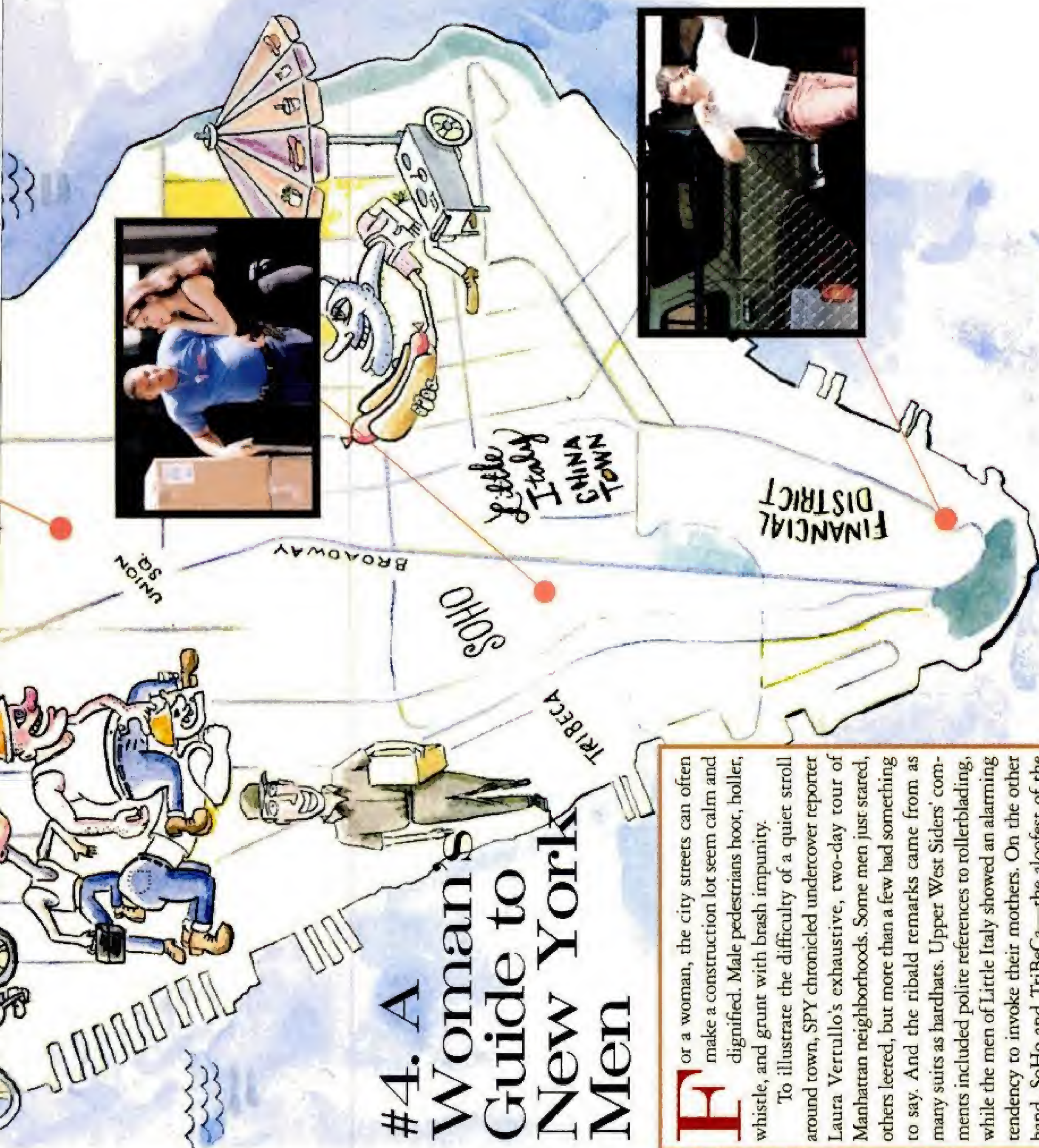
Despite the evident ambivalence toward unsolicited handouts, the number of flyer pushers is skyrocketing. But like drug dealers, they are not entirely to blame. If we want this epidemic to stop, we must cut off the demand. Next time, just say no.

ay in This Town! All of Which Begs Three Key Questions: "What









## #4. A Woman's Guide to New York Men

**F**or a woman, the city streets can often make a construction lot seem calm and dignified. Male pedestrians hoot, holler, whistle, and grunt with brash impunity.

To illustrate the difficulty of a quiet stroll around town, SPY chronicled undercover reporter Laura Vertullo's exhaustive, two-day tour of Manhattan neighborhoods. Some men just stared, others leered, but more than a few had something to say. And the ribald remarks came from as many suits as hardhats. Upper West Siders' comments included polite references to rollerblading, while the men of Little Italy showed an alarming tendency to invoke their mothers. On the other hand, SoHo and TriBeCa—the aloofest of the aloof areas—yielded not a single “Pssst.”

### WEST VILLAGE

“Hey, Sweetie! Have a nice day!”

“Hey, baby, can I have a bite of that [bagel]?”

### SOHO/TRIBECA

None

### MIDTOWN

“Pssst. Pssst. Pssst.”

“Hey baby, I see you smiling.”

“Woo, woo.”

“Gimme somma dat!”

“If you were mine, I’d cook and clean for you.”

“Bouncing tits, bouncing tits.”

### FLOWER DISTRICT

“Oh, so pretty, nice...I love you” [*blows kisses*]

“Suck me.” [*said into ear as passing by*]

“Hello, slim!”

“Hey, talk to me, bitch!”

### FLATIRON DISTRICT

“Yo, yo, yo! That’s the bitch I want to sit right here.”

[*mimes rear-entry copulation*]

“Pretty. Yeah, I’ll have some of that.”

“Mmmmm.”

“You’ve got a really sexy walk.”

### CHINATOWN/LITTLE ITALY

“Hey, mama.”

“Oh, sexy.”

“Whoa, whoa, whoa.”

“Bellissima.”

“Mama.”



# #5. What We Talk About When We Talk About Art

**T**hey lurk in the shadowy corners of coffee shops. They slither around the poetry sections in used bookstores. They descend on galleries like the plague. We're talking about **poseurs**, and in New York, they outnumber the rats and roaches put together. Put them in an art museum, and the symbolism hits the fan.

As a cautionary note to urban art enthusiasts, SPY presents snippets of actual dialogue overheard at the recent Salvador Dalí exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Those who insist on braving such pseudo-intellectual onslaughts are urged to bring a sturdy pair of earplugs.

## *Figure on the Rocks (Femme Couchée), 1926*

WOMAN: "Here he's clinging to the Greek draping. He's captured some of the sense of

draping from the Greeks. Or the Romans. The Romans were more sensual."

MAN: "Look at her breasts. The breasts are so...trajectory."

"The male presence is not obviously there, but it's definitely dominant."

"He's losing the anatomy to some of the geometric."

WOMAN: "I wonder why he painted on wood."

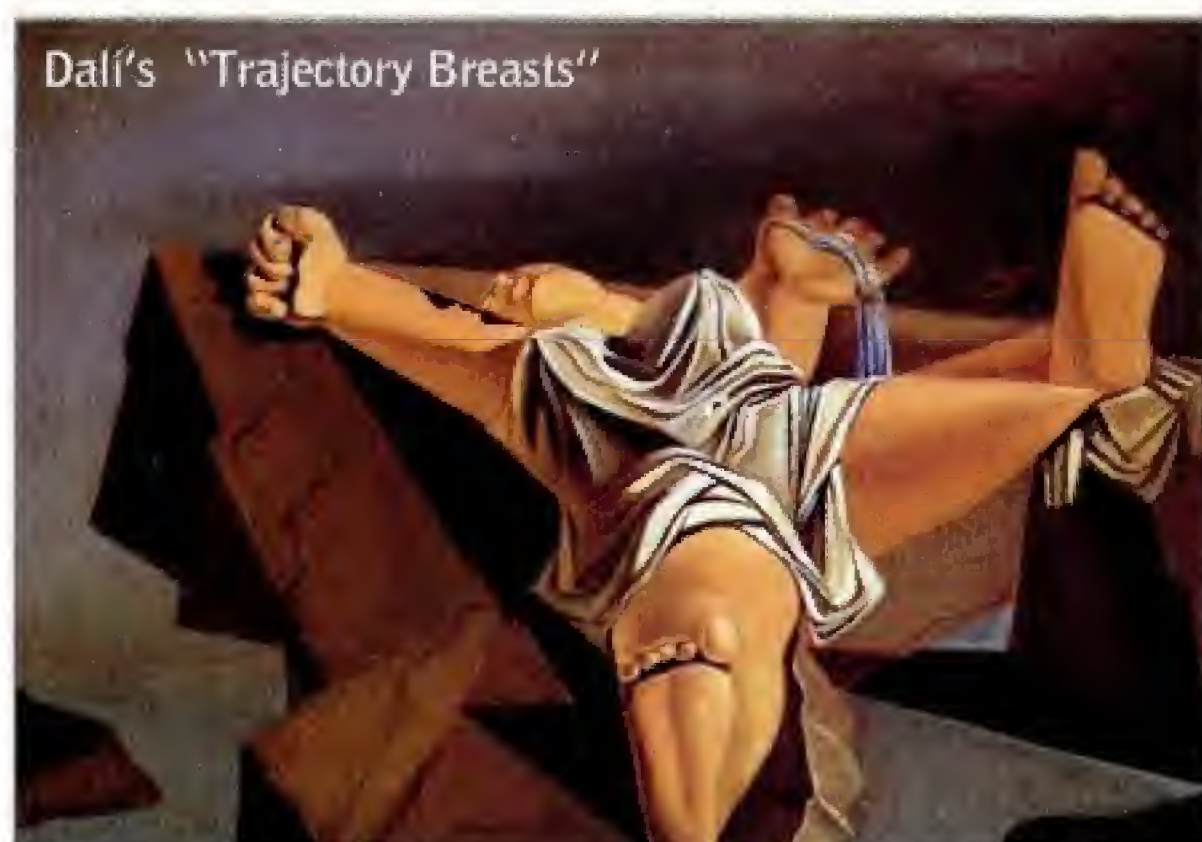
MAN: "Time. He was obsessed with preserving his work through eternity."

WOMAN: "So then why didn't he paint on metal...or stone?"

MAN: "Molecularly, they don't hold paint well."

"I would love to take Dalí out for a cup of latte."

"This one looks too crucifigional."



Dalí's "Trajectory Breasts"

## *The Sardana of the Witches, 1921*

"Look at that! He's, like, *mocking* everyone else."

"A lot of people have done that; it's a universal theme. When you get naked and dance around the fire it symbolizes the change of the seasons."

## *Venus and Sailor, 1925*

"I really think they should do something about the lighting on that *texture*; it's contrasting too much with the *texture* of the painting. It seems to me that they should move this whole [lighting] track back a bit more, so that it doesn't reflect off of this three-dimensional *texture*."

MAN: "Dalí's French, but he's still a man."

WOMAN: "Isn't he Spanish?"

MAN: "But he did a lot of work in France."

## *Still Life by Moonlight, 1926*

"There, too, the *reality* is just incredible..."

MAN: "Here he's got a fish skeleton. What he's doing here with this fish skeleton...it's..."

WOMAN: "Crazy."

MAN: "Isn't *life*?"

## *Study for Honey Is Sweeter Than Blood, 1927*

MAN: (reading title) "Honey Is Sweeter Than Blood."

WOMAN: "I'd think it *would* be."

MAN: "I don't know. I'm not a mosquito or a vampire bat."

"He starts having more fan-



tasies here—it's just that it's painted in a more realistic nature."

"Compared to Picasso, these are like on a whole other level. He took off through the stratosphere and kept going. Picasso just sat there on his Cubist ass."

## *The Persistence of Memory, 1931*

"Few things really impress me, and this isn't one of them."

"He was like a gatekeeper to a mystical plane that only his eyes could see.... God, to have that power."

"I think his early work is fresher."

"I think his later work is better executed."

## *The First Days of Spring, 1929*

"He melts unreality on top of reality like the Swiss cheese

Are We to Do? **Cats Are People, Too!**; "Hey, Baby, Why Don't You





you get on a French onion soup."

"You look at it and go, 'it's not a real thing, it's not a real thing,' but in the painting it *becomes* a real thing."

"Did you see the Magritte

"French Onion Soup"



show here? I much prefer him. His fantasies have more substance."

"There's nothing that I'd like to hang in my bedroom, but I do find it so fascinating."

### **William Tell and Grädiva, 1931**

"Sex. Sex and sexual identity.

He's obsessed with sex."

"Penis, penis, penis. Vagina, vagina, vagina. Boring, boring, boring."

### **Beigneuse (sic), 1928**

"Look at her left arm, the finger on the left arm. When you look at the whole thing clearly, it's a vagina. If you look at the right hand, she has sort of a vagina in her right hand. See this finger? It's touching the clitoris. The right hand is sort of balancing the left. I mean, the whole thing is just one big vagina."

MAN: "See the head here...it's amazing."

WOMAN: "That's the chest. See? Neck, clavicle..."

MAN: "Oh, I guess the head is *this* way."

WOMAN: "Here's the head."

MAN: "The mouth...with gaping teeth...almost like a diseased, clutching hand..."

bigger than the torso...like he feels he's kind of beckoning."

WOMAN: "Well, the Futurists had that kind of real misogynistic twinge. Just like Boccioni... What's interesting is the texture of this."

ture of this."

MAN: "Oh, that is. He just used sand—sea sand, it looks like."

WOMAN: "I love that—that 'mixed media.'"

### **Madrid Scenes, 1922**

"It's amazing how rich and famous he got doing this. I've got stuff like this scribbled all

over my high school notebooks."

MAN: "I actually met him at a party once."

WOMAN: "Dalí?"

MAN: "M m m - h m m ... Charming, charming man."

### **The Ants, 1929**

WOMAN 1: "He might have missed his calling. He could have been a greeting card designer—but not for Hallmark; for a nicer card company."

WOMAN 2: "If you sent that out as a card, people would think that it was mighty strange. It's an invitation to a party that I sure wouldn't go to."

"In a lot of ways Dalí and Bukowski are, like, kindred spirits. You know? They both, like, revel in the total bacchanalia of garbage."

### **Illumined Pleasures, 1929**

"There's too much *clarity*...I mean, it's just, like, *there*..."

TEEN: "I have a question for you, since you seem to know a lot. What is Cubism?"

MAN: "There is no simple answer to that. They radically altered perspectives and shapes. There's also 'extreme Cubism' and there's a painting in the other room—it's so-called 'synthetic Cubism'—where you barely recognize the elements. What you might want to do is get a book."

"I'd like to be able to turn it around. I wish I could stand on my head. I think that it would look a lot better upside down."

### **Barcelona Mannequin, 1926**

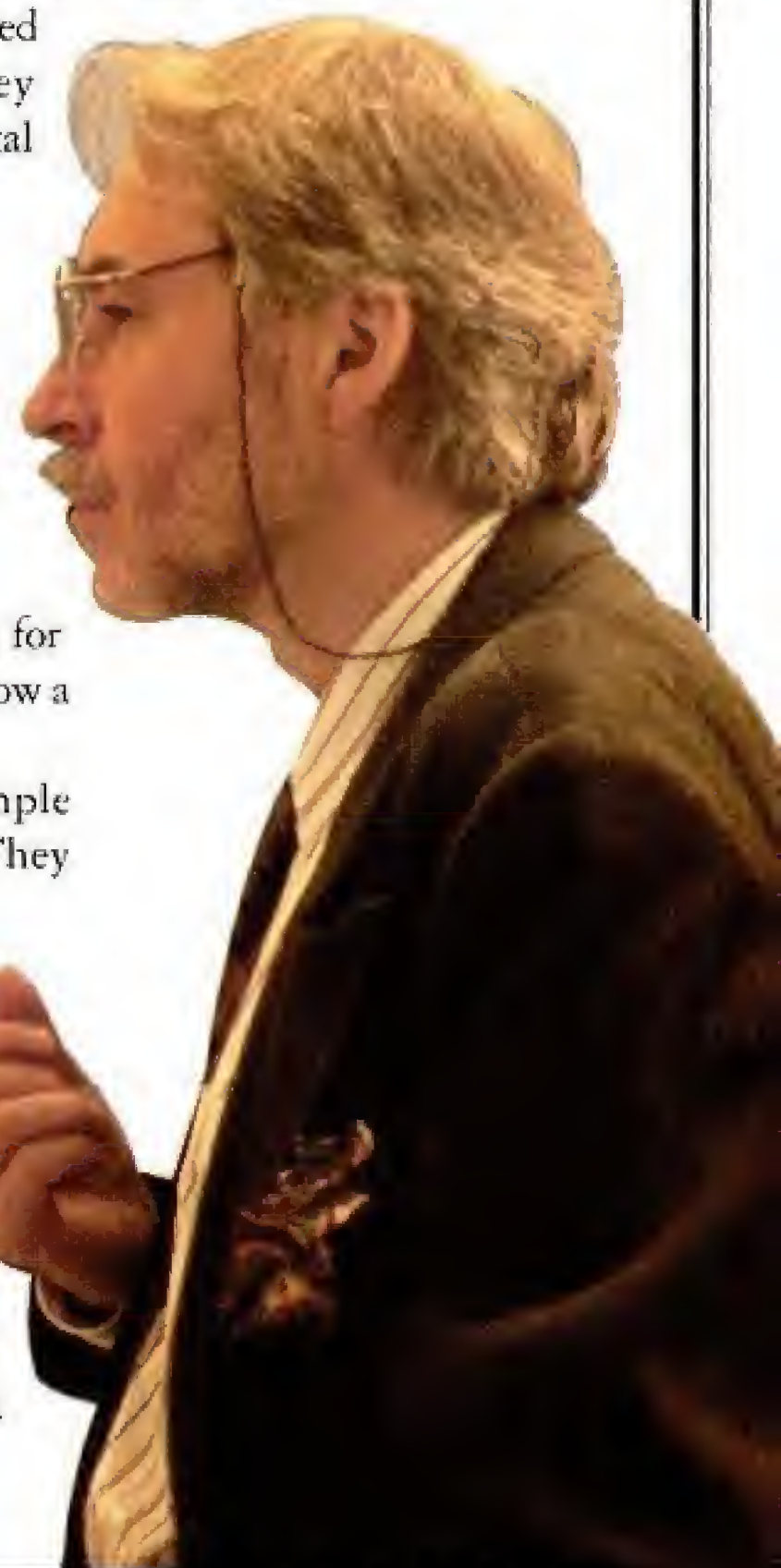
"You know it's meant to be cutting into the subconscious or the unreal, but you get the feeling that it's done through ultraviolet light or opening a door."

WOMAN 1: "It's like a three-dimensional Rolodex of flesh."

WOMAN 2: "They're doing that now. They're taking male and female bodies and they're putting them on computer."

WOMAN 1: "Like a database."

WOMAN 2: "A database of tissue." ☾



**ome with Me?"; and "This Fish Skeleton Is Crazy, but Isn't Life?"**



# All the Pres ident's Br ands

**SPY offers Clinton's endorsement at flat-bed prices.**

by Alex  
Gregory and  
Peter Huyck

Anybody can be bought. And these days, advertisers are more willing than ever to write the checks. Dennis Hopper and William Burroughs hawk sneakers. Woody Allen shills for Seibu stores in Japan. Even the sanctimonious Richard Dreyfuss is using his familiar voice to boost the profits of McDonald's. What's behind this surge of insidious hucksterism? The ever-present bottom line. In desperate times, desperate companies turn to desperate measures.









But just how far will they go? Is there anyone who *shouldn't* be bought—someone who, because of his or her position of power and influence, should be kept above the crass commercialism of the battling brands?

To test the business world's limits of good judgement, sensibility, and taste, we decided to see if we could get major corporations interested in a covert advertising venture that—if uncovered—would be the biggest political scandal since Watergate.

Our pitch was simple: To cover the legal debts stemming from the Whitewater hearings and a potential Paula Jones lawsuit, the President of the United States would make unofficial paid endorsements for select products. Furthermore, to ensure that any objections to our proposal would hinge upon scruples rather than budgets, we would offer Bill Clinton's services at Sally Struthers' rates.

Would marketing professionals refuse to compromise the integrity of the highest office in the land to unload a few extra cases of their product?

*Or would they consider buying a piece of the President...*

Our first step was to create a dummy company to act as middleman between President and advertiser. Since there's no better cover for a sleazebag operation than an ultra-Waspy name, we invented a title that smacked of fair-haired Washington intrigue: the L. Kensington Group. Under the pseudonym "Bradford C. Johnson," we sent business letters that mysteriously alluded to "an 'endorser' with unparalleled visibility in the global market" to over 60 well-known companies—some whose products the President might believably

endorse, some whose products might be a stretch, and others whose products the President (even *this* one) would not be caught dead with... Attached to each letter were some samples of work that we had allegedly done for one of our "clients":  
genuine  
p r e s s

clippings from the *New York Times* and *New York Newsday* in which the President names New Balance sneakers as his running shoe of choice.

When it came time to call the companies directly, we gave them a prepared sales pitch in which we told them that the President was a "big fan" of their product and then presented various ways for his brand loyalty to be made public—for a fee. Whenever possible, we emphasized the "sensitive" nature of our business and implored them to tell only the people who *absolutely* needed to know.

The question remained: Would anybody bite?

## Red Man Chewing Tobacco

**The Pitch:** The President was a big cigar fan until Hillary imposed a no-smoking rule in the White House. He has since taken up chewing Red Man smokeless tobacco. For \$5,000, Bill would jog in a Red Man T-shirt and cap. For \$10,000, he would dip a pinch in public, perhaps on the golf course. For the right price, the President might even consider putting a spittoon in the Oval Office.

**The Response:** Robert London, senior vice president of marketing for the Pinkerton Tobacco Co., took instantly to the idea of the President of the United States promoting and publicly partaking of chewing tobacco.

Rob: His wife doesn't have a problem with this?

SPY: No, it's the smoking she didn't approve of.



### THE L. KENSINGTON GROUP

40 EAST 21ST STREET, 11TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10010 • Tel: (212) 465-3278, Fax: (212) 260-7445

August 9, 1994

Paul Clayton  
Vice President, Marketing  
Burger King  
17777 Old Cutler Road  
Miami, FL 33157

Dear Mr. Clayton:

I am writing to inform you of a marketing opportunity that must be kept in the strictest of confidence.

As an experienced member of the corporate communications industry, no doubt you are familiar with the field of "product placement" advertising. Whether brands can be built effectively over the long term by their subtle inclusion in scenes from movies and television is a constant source of debate, but with the amount of clutter in the current media environment, product placement is, at the very least, one effective short-term solution.

But is there an even more powerful way for select leading marketers to cut through the clutter and establish their brands' preeminence? The answer is a hushed—rather than a resounding—"yes."

Enter The L. Kensington Group. We have access to an unofficial "endorser" who has unparalleled visibility in the global market. The enclosed samples should give you an idea of what he has been able to do for one of our clients.

As you may gather from the samples, ours is a highly sensitive business, so your utmost discretion with regard to this letter is much appreciated.

Please give me a call at (212) 465-3278, and we may discuss matters in greater detail. Thank you very much for your time.

Best regards,

*Bradford C. Johnson*

Bradford C. Johnson  
Senior Vice President



Rob: Interesting.

SPY: She encouraged him to switch from cigars to chewing tobacco. Hillary actually takes a dip from time to time, so she definitely doesn't have a problem with him chewing. And he loves Red Man.

Rob: Brad, let me ask you something—have you contacted other smokeless-tobacco companies?

SPY: No. Red Man is his chew of choice.

Rob: Okay [*relieved*]. And that's why you're coming to us. Because he enjoys using our product.

SPY: That is his preference. He has been chewing Red Man for the last six months—on the golf course, in the Oval Office, just about everywhere.

Rob: Okay. What kind of dollars are we talking about?

*Rob went on vacation for a week, but since discussions were going so well, he wanted us to continue with Allen Hillburg, his associate at Pinkerton.*

SPY: The President would present Red Man as the alternative to smoking. We could work the creative side of it and do what you want to do. It's pretty flexible, really.

Al: Well, we'd like to get as much exposure as possible. I mean, what if we were talking \$15,000 or \$20,000?

SPY: We could definitely get some television coverage for that kind of money. Do you have any particular ideas as to how you'd like to see the President present Red Man?

Al: Well, obviously if we could have the President *using* the product that would be great, but certainly wearing a hat and a T-shirt would be very important also.

SPY: There's nothing saying we can't do both.

Al: Right.

## Spam

**The Pitch:** The President has been a big fan of Spam all his life. His favorite sandwich is grilled Spam and melted Wisconsin cheddar. For \$5,000, we offer a cover story in *GQ* on the President, in which he talks about Spam. For \$10,000, we offer a Larry King interview during which a planted caller would ask the President about his favorite sandwich. In addition, the President would be willing to attend the annual Spam convention as the food-stuff's biggest supporter.

**Jim Horton, a manager at Jimmy Dean Foods, turned down our offer for an interesting reason: Jimmy and George Bush are "very close personal friends."**

**The Response:** We were quickly referred to Jeff Grev, director of marketing for Spam luncheon meats. After we explain the situation to him, Jeff begins to see the potential for the Presidential endorsement of pork by-products.

Jeff: When you're talkin' about, uh, you know, uh...dollar-wise cost? I mean—what, uh, what are you guys looking for? Something—you know, minimum five grand? I mean—what if we...what are you basing that on? What kind of coverage are you giving?

SPY: That's depending on how many times you want him to mention it and how much exposure you want.

Jeff: So is Bill deep in debt, or what's going on?

SPY: Yes, right now his net value is very much in the red.... The situation right now is that Bill is looking for outside revenue sources. Everybody knows that Bill can bounce back from just about anything, so he said, "Try to keep the operation hush-hush, but if anything happens, I'll just tell them that it is my favorite sand-



wich. It's my favorite meat."

*We explain the past and potential media arrangements and ask him what markets Spam is trying to reach.*

Jeff: Well, we're distributed nationwide. The Southeast—his home area—is a high consumption area for Spam luncheon meats, so it's not at all surprising that the guy is a fan of it. I guess the first thing we need is





## CRAFTMATIC ORGANIZATION, INC.

TO: Brad Johnson  
The L. Kensington Group

FROM: Edith Lever  
Dir. Marketing Services

DATE: September 9, 1994

RE: Endorsement proposal

This is to confirm that we are interested in more information concerning your proposal.

You have requested 2 Craftmatic beds and a \$5,000 fee. We need more information as to what media placement you can offer Craftmatic before we can make a final commitment.

As per our conversation, Craftmatic's customer profile tends to be 40 - 50 thru retirement in age, blue collar workers, laborers, middle income, most likely homeowners.

We prefer not to advertise in the inner-cities. We have a national distribution. Newspapers covering the suburban/rural markets, and retirement areas are good.

We need to know what you can offer us and at what cost. The beds themselves represent a sizable investment, especially assuming you want massage units on them. A final decision will be made when we receive your information.



something in here on some kind of letterhead with your name and address, because some people are not going to believe it, I'm sure. They're going to go, *What? The President wants to endorse Spam?*

SPY: Obviously, the fewer people who know about this the better.

Jeff: Oh yeah—we're not going to spread it all over the place. I'm going to go up the ladder to our executives. I just need something that is going to support its legitimacy and all that kind of thing.

### Craftmatic Adjustable Beds

**The Pitch:** The President finds the beds in the White House "not particularly comfortable." For \$5,000 and the cost of beds, delivery, and installation, we offer to refurbish the Lincoln Bedroom and the President's bedroom with Craftmatic adjustable beds, and we guarantee that the press will cover the event.

**The Response:** Edith Lever, vice president of marketing for Craftmatic Organization, Inc., tells us that, "There is an interest. They [her superiors] would want to know,

however, what it is you're proposing in the way of public relations." We tell her that through our contacts in the media, we guaranteed New Balance the front page of the *New York Times*.

*Slowly but surely, Edith begins to catch on.*

Edith: Where was the thing on Clinton and the shoes? Was it *U.S. News* where I read this?

SPY: We had *U.S. News*, the *New York Times*, the *New York Post*, *USA Today*. There were probably fifteen different magazines and newspapers throughout the country that picked this up, as well as MTV—we had people pose the question, the whole nine yards.

Edith: Yeah. I figured it was a fed question, right? Was the boxer shorts a fed question?

SPY: Oh, of course. How else are you going to get that question through? At a press conference, who else is going to ask, "What kind of shoes do you wear?"

*Next, she asks us to send a fax detailing "the where, the what, and how...because {we} have to determine whether that exposure is worth the price." We say that our price is negotiable. In our next conversation, she takes this statement to heart, haggling like a tourist in Mexico.*

Edith: We definitely don't want anything higher than what you already requested. That [figure] already might be too high for us.

SPY: That was just a ballpark figure, and obviously, if it was too high, we can bring it down a little bit.

Edith: Well, the question would be, at that price, what kind of package would you put together?

SPY: That would depend on what you want and





where you want it to go. If you want us to hit local papers—

Edith: National. I think I said that before.

*Shortly thereafter, we received a fax from Lever which simultaneously expressed interest and groused again about the President's price tag.*

## Ball Park Franks

**The Pitch:** Bill Clinton just loves the way Ball Park franks plump when you cook 'em. And since the President is planning on having fall cookouts at the White House, he would be willing to make Ball Park franks the official frank of his administration—for a fee. Through connections, we would send Larry King on remote to cover a cookout, and we would prepare a short feature on the hot dogs.

**The Response:** Margaret Riley, vice president of marketing for Hygrade Foods (manufacturers of Ball Park franks) had never received our letter. When we asked her if she would be interested in having the President make an unofficial endorsement of Ball Park, her initial response was one of disbelief.

Margaret: Are you *serious*?

SPY: Very much so.

Margaret: You can forgive me for thinking this sounds bizarre.

HYGRADE FOOD PRODUCTS ASSOCIATES  
Dedroit, Michigan 48219

September 13, 1994

Mr. Brad Johnson  
Senior Vice President  
The L. Kensington Group  
48 East 21st Street  
11th floor  
New York, NY 10010

Dear Brad:

Per our telephone conversation, the parameters of Hygrade Food Products marketing programs are as follows: The Ball Park Brand is a national brand that has a combination of national and regional consumer support executed behind it. The target audience for these efforts is female head of households, \$30,000 plus income, with children under 18 present in the household.

The preference in coverage for any consumer exposure would be national. However, there are three markets that are targeted for additional support where a regional effort would be beneficial: New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles. As long as these geographic priorities are addressed, there is no preference for media type, i.e., television versus print.

This information addresses the issues we discussed on the phone. If any additional information is required, please don't hesitate to contact me. I will be in the office Thursday afternoon as well as Friday.

I look forward to a detailed proposal on the opportunities your firm can offer the Ball Park Brand.

Sincerely,

*Margaret Riley*  
Margaret A. Riley  
Vice President, Director of Marketing

SPY: Most certainly.

Margaret: [laughs] I mean, Michael Jordan, yes!

*We offered to fax her the letter and press clippings. "That would be terrific," she said. She asked where we were headquartered. "I mean, I've never heard of the L. Kensington Group." And for good reason, we responded, citing the potential for embarrassment for the President. After we sent the fax over, we followed up.*

Margaret: Before I speak to anybody, you've got to give me a ball park figure on what you're talking about. What level of investment...ballpark figure—that's every pun intended. All our figures are indeed "ballpark" figures [laughs]. But give me an idea. Or is it totally negotiable?

SPY: It is fairly negotiable—depending, of course, on how much media coverage you want.

Margaret: Well, how much control do you have? Obviously it's a relatively unique situation.

A few days later, we received a fax with an overview of Ball Park's demographics.

## Subway

**The Pitch:** In the past, the President has been a big fan of McDonald's, but he has recently become concerned about his fat intake. For \$10,000, we promise that not only will the President switch from Big Macs to Subway sandwiches, but whenever the President is out jogging, he will stop in at Subway. We guarantee that our contacts in the media can make a major event out of it.

**The Response:** Steve Thomas, promotions supervisor for Subway, is surprised but unfazed by our tales of the President's gastronomic excesses.

SPY: I know the President really loves your sandwiches, because the last time I was in the Oval Office, about a week ago, he had Subway sandwiches brought in and he ate three of the foot-long sandwiches in about twenty minutes.

Steve: My God!

SPY: I know. So we thought it would be a natural for him to pitch for Subway—unofficially, of course.

Steve: What kind of commitment would there be on our end?

*After discussing details further, Steve told us that he would present our proposal to the marketing committee. We refaxed our letter and called him back the following week. The highlight of the conversation occurs when we started talking details. The promotions supervisor for the second-largest restaurant chain in the world actually attempts to haggle over the President's price tag.*



## Whoppergate

Steve: We would like to be on television as much as possible.

SPY: Are there any particular channels? Would it be cable? National?

Steve: National.

SPY: So more like something on NBC Nightly News?

Steve: Yup. Something like that.

SPY: We could do a piece with Brokaw.

Steve: You know, that budget amount that you mentioned—\$10,000—if that's negotiable...I'll let you know what I can locate, and we can work backwards from there.

SPY: Well, I'll tell you... \$10,000—that is for a major push. That's for the next time he's jogging, stopping by a Subway and having the media follow him and that kind of thing.

Steve: Right.

SPY: We could run something smaller for five. We could run it on NBC Nightly News and say that his new restaurant of choice is Subway.

Steve: Mmm-hmm.

SPY: We could have something in a health magazine...talking about how he's switched from the fatty burgers to turkey sandwiches at Subway. We could do something with Hillary and Martha Stewart...

Steve: Well, print is good as well, but we like to go for maximum reach, so I would say our primary choice is network TV.

## Jimmy Dean Sausages

**The Pitch:** The President starts every morning with a heaping plate of Jimmy Dean sausages, and he would agree to publicly link himself to Jimmy Dean in return for an undisclosed fee.

**The Response:** Jim Horton, manager, sales and marketing support for Jimmy Dean Foods, expressed trepidation for a very interesting reason.

SPY: I was actually having breakfast with Bill the other day, and he put away about ten Jimmy Dean sausages in less than five minutes. He just loves them.

Jim: That's great!

**Robert London, VP of marketing for Red Man chewing tobacco, approved the idea: "If we could have the President using the product that would be great!"**

honest with you.

SPY: We could present the endorsement in a lot of different ways. Apparently, the other day Bill did something that cracked everyone up at the table. He managed to stuff almost a dozen of the Jimmy Dean sausages in his mouth at once! Now if that's not a photo op, I don't know what is!

Jim: It would be to consider, but it would have to be very careful and I would be surprised if Mr. Dean wanted to participate.

SPY: Hillary can't keep enough Jimmy Deans in the White House. We have contacts in the press who think that this would make a heck of a story.

Jim: There could be a potential conflict internally.

SPY: What would the conflict be?

Jim: Jimmy [Dean] and George Bush are very good friends.

SPY: I see.

Jim: Very good friends.

SPY: That could be a problem.

Jim: George and Barbara have been guests on his yacht several times. Very close personal friends.

SPY: So, do you think that might—

Jim: I don't know. I'm just being

## Snapple

**The Pitch:** The President is a big fan of Diet Peach Snapple, because it is the only beverage that soothes his vocal chords when he gets hoarse. For \$5,000, he would







drink it on the golf course, keep it on his podium during speeches, and give cases of it to foreign dignitaries.

**The Response:** Lisa Ballas, marketing coordinator, expressed reservations about paying the President to endorse Snapple—but not because of the obvious problems normally associated with greasing an elected official. She simply felt it conflicted with the spirit of Snapple's advertising campaign; they do not use celebrity endorsers.

We wrote them off—for one full business day. Then we got a call from Snapple's attorney, Ken Mollins. He claimed to be calling to let us know they weren't interested, but he stayed on the phone for about twenty minutes, pumping us for information. It gradually became apparent that Snapple might be more interested than they were initially letting on. And we learned a few things about Snapple's own "unpaid" endorsement policy.

Ken: You gotta understand, we get solicited by companies every day. Companies that come up with schemes that are a lot crazier than this.... Like when I find out that the public relations head of the Mets is a huge Snapple fan, the way I found that out is he called me.... He said he loves the product. I sent him ten cases. I paid whatever the company was and they now keep a Snapple cooler on the bench at Shea, and we have basically a guarantee that it'll be shown three times a game [on TV].

SPY: Wow!

Ken: You gotta understand...I certainly couldn't pay a company based on the *possibility* that one day it's going to show up somewhere.

SPY: We were thinking we could have the Snapple on the front of the podium, not for the big press conferences, obviously not the State of the Union, but the smaller ones. Just general things, like when he's jogging he could wear a Snapple T-shirt. It would be more subtle.

Ken: Uh-huh. Things like that, you know—if you tell me, if we sit down at a table and you can basically tell me that no money exchanges hands until something like that happens?

*We assure Ken that no payment would be expected until the President had made the endorsement. He seems receptive, though we shudder to think about the "crazier schemes than ours" that other companies come up with.*

Ken: Okay. At the moment they're not interested, but you have piqued my interest because you do seem to have some knowledge of the fact of what he does. I'll raise it, I'll see what they want to do.

SPY: If you could talk to as few people as possible—

Ken: I'm not talking to anyone. Look, if this can be done, it's fine.

## Weight Watchers

**The Pitch:** The President is considering joining a weight-loss program and becoming an unofficial endorser. For \$5,000, the President's progress would be reported in various newspapers. For \$10,000, periodic "diet updates" could appear on *Larry King Live*, where the President would show off his new figure.





**The Response:** Linda Carilli, general manager, corporate affairs at Weight Watchers, was openly excited at the prospect of having the President on their weight-loss plan. During the course of our discussions, she even began to come up with some suggestions of her own.

SPY: So is there interest on your part to get a piece of the President?

Linda: Sure. Yes. Let me talk to some people here. I actually have an idea as to how this thing might work, because I wouldn't see him attending the official Weight Watchers meetings or anything of that sort. We have in test market something we call "Weight Watchers At Home," which is actually the program delivered to people's homes so they can follow it on their own.

SPY: Okay... Right, and he wouldn't mind attending a few meetings if that's better for you and it would provide the kind of coverage that you would want.

Linda: We're going to have the President walk into a Weight Watchers meeting?

SPY: Sure!

Linda: Is he sponsoring anybody else or promoting anybody else?

SPY: No, there are no other weight-loss products that he will be sponsoring.

Linda: Okay, but there are other products that he will be sponsoring?

SPY: Yes, he is doing some others on the side. They are all highly confidential, of course.

Linda: Okay. However, if I see a name drop, I'll be able to figure out where it's coming from [laughs].

SPY: The funny thing is, you would never even think about it. You would never stop to ask, "Why is the *New York Times* mentioning the President's choice of shoes on its cover?"

Linda: But now I'll know why.

*Linda proceeds to mention that while some men follow the program, the membership is primarily female.*

SPY: I just thought of this, but if it would be better for you, we could have Hillary sign up for Weight Watchers and attend with Bill. She could stand to lose a few pounds herself.

Linda: Okay, that would work.

*Linda contacted us the following day. She requested a meeting with us and Ted Smyth, vice president of corporate affairs for the H.J. Heinz Corporation (owners of Weight Watchers), at the offices of the L. Kensington Group. We accepted (see page 62).*

## Ping Golf Clubs

**The Pitch:** The President, an avid golfer, prefers Ping clubs but has never gone on record as saying so. We would use our contacts in the media to arrange an interview with golf magazines in which the President would talk about why he plays with the Ping Zing 2, the company's latest model. Or we could wait until Christmas and have the First Lady give the President a set of Pings as a gift, an event for which we could guarantee national exposure.



**The Response:** Of all of the people we talked to, nobody grasped the workings of the L. Kensington Group as quickly and as profoundly as Doug Hawken, director of marketing for Karsten/Ping. If we had been a legitimate organization, we might have even offered him a job.

Doug: Is that an actual agreement you have with the President to use him? Is that right?... So, let's say we want to, uh, capitalize on that—I'll take this before "the family" and they say, "Yeah, we'd sure like to let people know that he plays our clubs." ...what's the deal?

SPY: Okay, here's how it works. We have contacts in the media, and what we do is work very closely with them and, depending on who you want to reach, get it into whatever publications you want.

Doug: Okay, let's assume we're interested in avid core golfers, and we like golf magazine-type publications, *Golf Digest*, et cetera.

SPY: Oh, that's easy. That's perfect. As you know, the President is always out on the golf course when he's on vacation. What we could do is arrange, say, an interview, a profile, and someone could go to Martha's Vineyard when he's on the golf course and follow him around, ask him what courses he likes to play, any good golfing stories, and

**Before the prank was over, we had taken credit for promoting New Balance shoes, Ben & Jerry's ice cream, and for planting the "boxer shorts" question on MTV.**

where from \$5,000 to \$7,500.

Doug: That's all the information as far as costs that I need. Because that's manageable—very. I need to sit down with one of "the family" members and ask them if they're interested and if they'd like to pursue this, and then I will call you back and ask you to go ahead and send a proposal and a couple of magazines. I need to get with our director of advertising.

what kind of clubs he uses. And then, Ping Zing 2—right there.

Doug: Okay, and you're saying technically, you can arrange for somebody from one of these magazines to go and do an article that complements what they're trying to do, too—sell magazines...

SPY: Exactly! That's just it—it's no challenge at all.

Doug: Okay, perfect. Can you give me some ballpark costs, or anything like that? Can you fax any of that to me, just so I can present it to "the family," or is it necessary?

SPY: What we could do is send you a full-scale proposal. The media exposure depends really on what you want... So that could be running any-

## NO HUBBA FOR BUBBA:

# Some Other Folks We Talked To...

**HUBBA BUBBA BUBBLE GUM:** "Gonna have to take a pass on it. Wrong market...ours are kids aged six to fourteen. Most of them are lucky if they know their parents."

**BLUBLOCKERS SUN GLASSES:** "What I need to know from you before we can even further this conversation is what's the cost [and] how many times will he

mention Blublockers?"

**CADILLAC:** "Let me just say that we're interested, but to the extent to which we are interested, I really can't say without knowing exactly how this would be done."

**BEN & JERRY'S:** "I guess I'm going to decline your offer because it's already public that the President likes Ben & Jerry's ice cream. We've got

clippings from Time where it's already been stated... Heath Bar Crunch... We've done things at the White House. We were at the Easter Egg Hunt last year—we were asked to do that. So I guess what I'm saying is that I feel as though we're already there."

**EVERLAST BOXING EQUIPMENT:** "Don't get me wrong. The President is an important figure, but I just don't know what he would do with boxing equipment. Come out wearing a pair of gloves?"



**LITTLE CAESAR'S PIZZA:** "Isn't he allergic to cheese?"

**YOO HOO:** "You want to introduce Yoo Hoo to the White House? Sounds great!"

**GARCIA Y VEGA CIGARS:** "I just wish he were more capable...as a President."



SPY: You could make it really easy for us if you just drop a brief note saying what your budget is.

Doug: Well, let me tell you. We don't have a budget. Period.

SPY: Don't have a budget.

Doug: Nope. So whatever we want to do, we do. I can tell you that. So if it's \$500,000 and we think it's worth it, we can spend it. And if it's \$10,000 and we think it's worth it, we can spend it. It's not an issue.

SPY: Great. But just to get an idea of what you want promoted—the Ping Zing 2, do you want graphite, do you want steel—all that's really up to you. You know your market better than we do, and if you want any particular demographics, and if you're thinking about TV.

Doug: Okay, I'll see if there's an interest, and, if so, I'll try to draw in some parameters that give you some idea of what we're looking for—that we want to reach the avid core golfer and we want to do it in two magazines and we want to do it three times this year. And we'd want to mention the fact that the Zing 2 is the best thing he's ever hit.

SPY: Great. That's perfect. Let me give you my per-

**Both Hillary Clinton and Joycelyn Elders were on Weight Watchers back in Little Rock, company representatives told us. But “nobody can know about [it].”**

sonal number, and the sooner we get rolling on this the better. Christmas-time is perfect. We could have the First Lady present him with a brand new set of Pings as a Christmas gift. That could be everywhere. That's natural.

Doug: Okay, this sounds intriguing. I've just assumed this position of responsibility, but this sounds exciting, and I'll put it in front of them, and we'll see what happens. The point is we've had a couple of articles in the newspaper, where he's been playing golf and there's a picture of him with his Ping clubs, but that's just coincidence, isn't it? This is not something you've done for us before.

SPY: Right.

Doug: This is something we could

engineer.

SPY: The thing is—it's perfect, because it's a natural, because he really does like Pings.

Doug: Yeah, right. “The family” will like that, because it's not gimmicked.

SPY: It's not a stretch... But, as you know, the President has incurred a lot of legal debts over the past year, so he needs to make a little money on the side. And this is all unofficial and very, very quiet.

Doug: I hear you. You got it.

## THE TRUTH ABOUT HILLARY: H.J. Heinz Spills the Beans

A phony office. Two hidden video cameras. A micro-cassette recorder in a flowerpot. And the vice president of corporate affairs for the largest food producing company on earth. In a conspiracy scene too preposterous for even an Oliver Stone movie, SPY held an exploratory meeting with Ted Smyth, vice president, corporate affairs for the H.J. Heinz corporation, and

Linda Carilli, general manager, corporate affairs for Heinz affiliate Weight Watchers International, in which serious discussion revolved around the President's gut.

“We've got to get him off the ice cream,” we said gravely. “We've seen him go through a pint of Ben & Jerry's in ten minutes.”

“Instant death,” replied Smyth with a shudder.



For more than an hour, the two gave us their pitch: “Not wishing to be self-serving, but going on something like Weight Watchers also has the advantage of being identified with regular people,” Smyth pointed out. “It's the opposite of the expensive haircut.”

“Or the personal chef,” Carilli chimed in. “We can publicize that it's the least expensive.”

We expressed our anxiety about the possibility of Clinton actually gaining weight while on the program.

“I would wait until he's looking thinner and feeling really



## Burger King

After getting such enthusiastic responses from so many companies, we started to wonder whether we had inadvertently stumbled onto a brilliant marketing idea. Had we been too narrow-minded to realize that this was, perhaps, not as unscrupulous a venture as we had envisioned? *Not one single company* ever disputed our claim that the President was for sale.

But before we could slip into the abyss, salvation came in the form of Paul Clayton, vice president of marketing for Burger King. If this prank were a movie, Paul Clayton would be the hero—a modern-day Jefferson Smith, played with the dewy-eyed patriotic conviction that only Jimmy Stewart could convincingly muster.

We gave him a sell hard enough to make Willy Loman cringe.

**The Pitch:** It is common knowledge that Bill Clinton has ended many a morning jog with a photo op in McDonald's. Recently, however, Chelsea has turned him on to the virtues of Burger King's Whopper. For \$5,000, the President of the United States of America would announce to the world that he was switching from frying to flame-broiling—potentially the biggest marketing coup in Burger King's history.

**The Response:** Paul: Are you asking me whether or not I would pay Bill Clinton to go public with that?

SPY: It's much more along the lines of a product placement-type endorsement. Obviously, this would be thoroughly unofficial. But we have done work for clients like New Balance in the past.

Paul: Does he get money?

SPY: I'm sure you're aware of his situation right now, with the legal fees.

Paul: Yes.

SPY: And he's in fairly bad financial straits. So it's potentially embarrassing, but not in any way unethical, because he does use the products.

Paul: I'm not interested.

SPY: Is there any particular reason?

Paul: It just doesn't make me feel good—the President of the United States doing this...it just doesn't sit well with me.

After explaining that the Paula Jones and Whitewater charges were "trumped-up," and that the President was only doing this to avoid hitting up the American people for money, Paul proposed the fairest possible solution:

Paul: I tell you what. Can you call me back on Monday? I will ask the chairman of the company if he'd like to consider it, because you're obviously getting a personal response from Paul Clayton.... If he tells me to change my mind, then I will tell you that on Monday. And if he agrees with me, I will tell you that too.

On Monday we received calls from Burger King's public relations department and their corporate ad agency. They wanted to talk. ☛



confident about what he's doing before we said anything about it," Carilli said.

"And then it could come out," Smyth suggested. "But he doesn't boast about it...it comes out when someone asks him a question, and he says, 'Sure, I've been on this, and I've been doing it for a

number of months. I'm feeling good about it....'"

As the tone of the meeting became increasingly chummy, our co-conspirators began to divulge some information that would be disastrous if ever found out by, say, a national magazine...

• Hillary Clinton was a

member of the Weight Watchers "Inner Circle" program in Arkansas. "She was, as I understood, very, very dedicated to it, and was basically there

every time she could be."

—Linda Carilli

• Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders was a Weight Watchers dropout. "That's one that nobody can know about."

—Ted Smyth

• Rumors of a Unilever buyout of Heinz are exaggerated. "I used to work for Lipton,

which is a Unilever company, and my former secretary is the secretary for a vice president at Lipton, and she was the one that brought it up to me. She goes, 'You know, it was so stupid—Unilever was looking at one very small piece of business as a possibility.' That was it. It had nothing to do with Heinz."—Linda Carilli

At the conclusion of the meeting, we told them that Clinton was busy with Haiti, but would turn his attention to Weight Watchers in November. After all, politics are important, but business is business.



# hungry



How **Al Sharpton** went to Rwanda, was largely ignored by **the media**, and received a rather interesting reaction from **the locals**.

by andrew  
cohen

# for







know  
lea





esterday the Rev announced that he's taking a week-long fact-finding tour of Rwanda and Zaire. "I am showing humanitarian concern at risk to myself," he made sure to explain to puzzled reporters. Imagine. The rotund Reverend nosing around a country plagued by starvation and other miseries. The man is pushing 300 pounds: Will he eat potato chips and drink bottled water the whole time? Will he steal away to four-star hotels for showers and dry cleaning? *And what will he do with his hair?*

The Reverend Al denies that the Rwanda trip is publicity for his upcoming Senate race against chinless arch-nemesis Daniel Patrick Moynihan ("As far as I know, no one in Rwanda or Zaire can vote for me," says the Rev), but no one really expects Sharpton to get enough votes to win. The Rev says that, short of being elected to public office, his goal is to become "New York's Jesse Jackson." Of course, before he wanted to become New York's Jesse Jackson, he was pretty well-known for being New York's Al Sharpton: former FBI informant, reformed race-baiter, promoter of the Tawana Brawley hoax, the likely model for the preacher in *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, and, according to Mario Cuomo, the "classiest" candidate in a 1992 New York Senate race distinguished by Alfonse D'Amato's awful sobbing and Geraldine Ferraro's husband's rumored dealings with kiddie-porn vendors and the Mafia.

Which brings us back to the original question: Just what is Al Sharpton going to *do* in Rwanda?

JULY 28.

Bertie, Reverend Al's new press guy, says we'll be staying at the Intercontinental Hotel, but I know that there is no Intercontinental in Goma, Zaire, new home to 1.5 million refugees and 30,000 Rwandan war criminals and the epicenter of a cholera epidemic. Most journalists I know are living in tents on a grassy knoll beside the Goma airport, behind some barbed wire. I'm beginning to wonder if the Rev is fully aware of the risks to his person that his "humanitarian concern" entails—including the cerebral malaria that has so far felled two hardened journalists and the fact that one Rwandan refugee is dying every minute.

I tell all this to Bertie. "Really?" he says. "Oh shit. We couldn't get through to confirm the hotel reservations."

GOMA, ZAIRE. AUGUST 2.

At the Hotel Caribu, the Rev can't get a room. "Don't matter," he says hoarsely. "I'll just pitch a tent. I just think it's important to be here." He is slouched in a leather chair in the lobby, wearing what might once have been a snappy black linen safari ensemble. Now, like the rest of us, he is covered in lava dust. His hair, with its reddish highlights and processed curls, looks a mess.

Opposite the Rev is Minister Clemson Brown, in what he clearly considers "African" dress: flowing white robe and ornate skullcap. But since all the other Africans around us seem to be wearing business suits, Clemson looks like he wandered in from the set of *The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad*. On the other hand, Carl Redding, Sharpton's political adviser/bodyguard (and former offensive guard with the New York Giants), is

wearing the complete Desert Storm outfit: combat boots, beige fatigues, web belt, floppy hat. Clemson is busily unpacking the video camera that he will not turn off for the next week. Next to him is the only other "journalist" on the trip: Joe Bragg, of New York City's 98.7 KISS-FM radio station.

Meanwhile, Bertie is in conference at the reception desk, saying, "We just need to find some *space* for the Reverend," and gesturing with his hands to convey Sharpton's bulk to the unbelieving Belgian hotel manager. Unexpectedly, a World Food Program employee in a Ché Guevara T-shirt checks out of her room. The Rev's entourage is in luck. While they check in, I go back to the journalists' tent city to get my bags.

**9 P.M. In the Goma press tent, a TV producer asks me if I'm with an NBC station and I tell him I'm not. "I know you're covering Sharpton," he says, "and I wanted to know if you were an affiliate because we're getting a lot of pressure from his bodyguard or henchman, whoever**

**he is, to give him some coverage. He says, 'Hey, do you know Andy Lack?' The owner of**

**NBC! I can't believe it, he was trying to intimidate me!"**

As I'm leaving, one of the wire-service reporters tells me that the New York office has sent an advisory: *Rev Al Sharpton arriving. Pls. do not cover unless he does something outrageous.*

**10 P.M.** Back at the Hotel Caribu. "It's about time we gave aid to Africa without political strings attached," the Rev is saying. "We need real development projects in Africa, not just Band-Aids." Ironically, there's been a power failure and the Rev is sitting in the lobby in total darkness. Carl is brandishing his military-issue flashlight, which he shines under the Rev's chin. All we need is a campfire, so we can start telling ghost stories.

Actually, I'm impressed with what Sharpton has to say in this little lights-out press conference. It's only when he goes off-script, into the realm of "fact-finding," that he runs into problems. For example: the Rev says he drove from the Goma airport to the hotel with the former defense minister of





Rwanda. "The former defense minister of Rwanda?" I ask.

"That's right," says the Rev.

But Augustin Bizimana, the former defense minister, is a wanted man in every country that was a party to the 1948 Geneva Convention. He is, in fact, a Rwandan Heinrich Himmler—part of a cabal of extremists who planned an extermination campaign that claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands of Rwandans.

"Did you ask him about the killings?" I ask the Rev, my head whirling slightly.

"He didn't bring that up," Sharpton says.

"How do you know that he was really Augustin Bizimana?"

"Well, actually," the Rev says, "this guy said his name was André."

# AUGUST 3.

The Rev has decided that our first stop will be the SOS Village—a UNICEF orphanage on the outskirts of Goma. Bertie has gone to the morning press briefing to rent a car and to advertise the Rev's arrival. It's been a long night. Certain

kinds of malaria pills give you strange dreams. The Rev jokes that he dreamt of his wife and woke up with Carl in his arms. Carl vigorously denies this. I'm beginning to feel like I'm on a high school field trip.

On his "fact-finding" trip to Rwanda and Zaire, Sharpton showed an amazing ability to frighten children (left), strut confidently in front of his own camera (middle), and be largely ignored by a press (below) that was warned, "Please do not cover unless he does something outrageous."



Dressed today in an olive-drab military uniform and jungle boots, the Rev plays with some of the local children—those who aren't too frightened of him. A few actually run away in fear. We talk to Carmen Gorrigos, one of the nurses, who has had malaria twice. She is wor-

rried about the fast approaching rainy season. The Rev also meets the mysterious Madame Yvette, the Zairian woman on whose land the orphanage is built. They try to figure out a way for Sharpton's congregation to make donations directly to the orphanage.

**The visit has taken less than an hour. Now comes my lesson in politics: We spend the next two hours in the French military tent making phone calls to the media.**

Not one drop of American aid has made it to the largest orphanage in Goma, the Rev declares in one interview. He then places a call to Jesse Jackson, who says he too will visit Goma in the near future. Fortunately, Harry Belafonte and Tipper Gore are coming this weekend. The calls, made from a satellite phone, would equal more than \$600 in "direct donations" to the orphanage. In fact, the tab for this party of five, including KISS-FM? Twenty-thousand, cash. Somehow, though, I feel the Rev misses the irony.

The Kibumba refugee camp is next. As we arrive, three men driving a pickup truck with a "Guinness Is Good for You" sign painted on the hood are collecting bodies from the side of the road. The camp, like the line of wrapped bodies, stretches for miles. We go to the site of a mass grave and the Rev retreats to his car, having seen enough. A passing television reporter cuts in Sharpton's way, yelling: "Hey Rev, fancy meeting you here."

Sharpton looks queasy, but hemmed in by 30 or 40 impoverished onlookers, he addresses the camera: the devastation, the rainy season, American aid a drop in the bucket, pressure Clinton for an Africa policy. The TV crew packs up and we're finally on our way. A group of refugees, pointing at Sharpton, ask our interpreter, "Is that Idi Amin?"

I'm impressed by the Rev's ability to condense his day for the cameras, but not by the absolute certainty he assumes after a mere *hour's worth* of fact-finding. How can he simply call for a massive U.S. relief effort in Goma? The refugees I've spoken to so far want to go home to Rwanda—not stay in Zaire. On the other hand, the Rwandan government-in-exile (composed of extremist soldiers) wants a huge relief effort in Goma—but only because it wants the refugees to stay put while it plots a new war.

Sharpton, of course, hasn't seen the extremist soldiers—except for "André," the phony defense minister. He hasn't asked the refugees what they want. He hasn't even determined for himself, let alone for public comment, whether the new Rwandan government is hell-





bent on retribution or is as moderate and pluralist as it claims to be. *He hasn't even been to Rwanda yet.* Still, he positions himself as an authority. After only an hour.

2 P.M. We spend the rest of the day cruising for priests. The Rev wants to have a pray-in at the border of Zaire and Rwanda tomorrow morning. But most of the priests we saw said they couldn't attend. In a dictatorship like Zaire's, prayer is politics, and the refugee situation is *serious* politics.

One Anglican priest, Minister Masimango, whose church has organized a lot of relief work, decides to attend. I say to Clemson that the best thing Sharpton can do here—aside from courting Democratic votes or being mistaken for a Ugandan dictator—is to call attention to local relief groups like Masimango's. These are the people who will still be here when the superpowers pick up their soldiers and go home.

Bertie and I naively suggest that the Rev stage his prayer-fest for eight o'clock in the morning, since the plan is to drive to Kigali (a three-hour trip), meet the American ambassador to Rwanda, and return to Goma by nightfall. Rwanda is a country of narrow mountain roads and steep cliffs, and I don't really want to know what it's like in total darkness.

Naturally, Sharpton doesn't heed the warning—he wants to be able to announce the prayer meeting at the eight o'clock press briefing. He tells Masimango to meet us at the border the next morning at ten.

#### AUGUST 4.

We arrive at the Rwandan border and there is nobody there. The press has evidently decided to ignore the Rev, but what about the priest? Eventually someone, Clemson, I think, realizes that Minister Masimango does not own a car. We go back and find him walking along a dirt road. The KISS-FM correspondent turns out to be a minister, too. After the prayer we go to the border station and pick up Desirée, our 17-year-old Rwandan Patriotic Army escort. He sits next to the Rev and props his AK-47 on the seat, to the Rev's visible alarm. It's almost noon when we leave.

The interior of Rwanda is as beautiful as Goma, but desolate. There's no one here. Everyone who should be living here is in camps in Goma. What's keeping them there? Are they too sick to leave? No transportation? Are soldiers chopping up or shooting people who want to return? We still don't know.

It looks like we will never find out. This is Sharpton's only day in Rwanda, I realize; tomorrow he's flying back to New York from the Goma airport. Here's the extent of his knowledge so far:

Rev, have you seen any of the human-rights reports on what happened here?

Yeah.

On the genocide?

Yeah. I think I saw one.

You going to address that in your fact-finding?

Yeah, absolutely.

It's easier to draw him out about U.S. politics: "Until there's a third political party, people will always hold their



noses and vote for the Democrats. NAFTA, GATT, Haiti, no matter. These Democrats figure, hold your nose, hold your ass, so long as you vote for me."

The Rev is at his best when he's being pugnacious, but now that I know he's going back to New York tomorrow, I begin to wonder again what he thinks he's accomplished in Rwanda.

But the Rev is busy talking about boxing: Twenty years ago the Ali/Foreman fight in Zaire put Don King on the map. They called it the Rumble in the Jungle. This right here is the Second Rumble in the Jungle.

**Our Zairian driver insists on stopping the car every time Clemson sees a view he wants to video. This is madness. I explain that, unless we hurry to Kigali, we're going to risk driving back to Goma in the dark. From the back of the van, we yell to the driver, "Allez! Allez!" (Go! Go!) In the front of the van, the Rev is yelling, "Olé! Olé!"**

"No," Joe says, "that's Spanish."

The rest of the trip is pretty quiet. We have to stop one more time when the Rev asks, "How do you say 'I have to take a leak' in French?" As he climbs out of the van the door falls off its hinges. On his return from the bushes he remarks: "I've just contributed more to Rwanda than the average U.S. senator."

#### 4:30 P.M. KIGALI AIRPORT.

The ambassador snubs Sharpton, saying he is in a meeting, but the American GIs want their picture taken with the Rev. You can see it cheers him up. He's also able to do a quick interview for *Stars & Stripes*. I'm struck by how adaptable he is: He charged into Zaire demanding to know why the United Nations was so slow to respond to the disaster in Goma; he charged into Rwanda demanding to see the ambassador in Kigali; and everywhere he went he charged right into the cameras. But no one was interested, and he never got any answers.

No matter. With *Stars & Stripes* he makes the trip sound like a triumph of statesmanship. The angry words about the U.N. and the United States are forgotten; the point of the trip now is to show that black American leaders are committed to aiding Africa. The Rev is beginning to sound senatorial—certainly no worse than the average senator.

After half an hour in Kigali—and only half a day in Rwanda—it's time for the Rev's party to regroup. The driver of the doorless van, afraid of a fatal plunge, is threatening to leave. I tell Bertie that I'm staying here in Kigali and wish him luck. I move my bags inside the airport and when I come back, everyone is gone. That is, almost everyone: Desirée, our escort, is standing in the road with his gun, wild-eyed, stranded. The Rev and his crew are on their way back to Zaire in the dark, wary of a plunge and getting ready for the next ambulance chase. )





1-6-94 8:07 p.m.  
Situation: Mother and two  
children in mall parking lot

## The first alarm system designed to protect you as well as your car...

*Revolutionary new vehicle security system is the first of its kind to focus on the safety of the vehicle driver as well as the vehicle itself.*

By Charles Anton

**D**o you wonder why car alarms have countless features to protect your car, but nothing to protect you? After all, what's more important your car or the safety of you and your family?

Now there is a car alarm that *will protect you and your family*. It is the first of its kind to focus on the safety of the vehicle owner as well as the vehicle itself.

**Protect yourself.** It all begins with the panic button. Imagine you're walking to your car at night and a person approaches. Pushing the panic button on your transmitter lets your car come alive with a shrieking siren and flashing headlights. While the panic alarms of other vehicle security systems have a range of 100 feet, the Smart Alarm's panic alarm lets you call for help or scare away potential attackers from up to 400 feet!

**Exclusive feature.** Unlike other car alarm systems that begin and end their focus on per-

sonal protection with the panic alarm, that's just the beginning of the Smart Alarm. In addition to the panic alarm, the Smart Alarm also has a

car finder feature. You'll never again have to wander around a dark and dangerous parking lot searching for your car. You will be able to know where your car is from anywhere within 400 feet by flashing its lights and briefly sounding the siren. You can activate and deactivate your car's headlights by remote control to light your way in a dark driveway or parking lot.

**Carjacking.** The Smart Alarm also addresses a growing hazard for today's motorists—carjacking. It's alarming how often drivers are hurt in their cars because they refuse to give them up to carjackers. Because of its anti-carjacking device, the Smart Alarm allows you to safely retain your car when confronted by a carjacker. This is made possible by a delayed panic alarm.

### What makes Smart Alarm better?

■ **Range.** Most car alarm features only work up to 100 feet away—all Smart Alarm features work up to 400 feet away.

■ **Panic button.** Smart Alarm lets you call for help or scare away potential troublemakers by controlling a piercing alarm and your car's headlights.

■ **Car finder.** Your car will be able to let you know where it is by flashing its lights and briefly sounding the siren.

■ **Carjacking.** Its delayed panic alarm allows you to safely prevent theft of your car when confronted by a carjacker.

■ **Easy installation.** Other car alarms are complicated or cost hundreds of dollars to install. Smart Alarm is inexpensive, and you can install it in just minutes.



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**Easy installation.** Installing the Smart Alarm requires no fumbling with wires. Special Plug-In Connectors let you install the Smart Alarm without a single wire-cutter! Simply unplug the headlight connector, plug in the Smart Alarm connector, and then plug the headlight connector to the Smart Alarm. Connect the Smart Alarm to the battery cable with the special clip. In minutes, you and your car can enjoy complete 24-hour protection. Away from your car, you'll feel safer knowing that your car is protected! Near your car, you'll feel safer knowing that you are protected!

All you do is give up your car and activate the delayed panic alarm. When the assailant has reached a safe distance and is no longer a threat to you, a deafening 120dB siren and flashing lights will force him to flee your car, letting you recover it safely.

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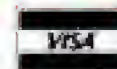
The siren's tone and volume can be adjusted to six separate tones. As a result, you'll never confuse it with any other alarm. You can also customize the siren, making it louder in noisy neighborhoods and quieter in more peaceful neighborhoods.

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Beginning  
January 1, 1995, the global village will engage in a year-long celebration marking the 50th anniversary of the United Nations. What better time to ask: Exactly what does the United Nations *do* anyway? Is it a vital organ for world peace—or just an EPCOT Center with bureaucrats and tanks? And who's that dashing fellow with all the medals?





# Believable

GRANTED, THE U.N. DOES have distinct purposes—not the least of which are to maintain international peace and to help solve economic, cultural, and humanitarian problems. But the fact is, when it comes right down to it, the U.N. is a silly place.

A silly silly place, as in Boutros Boutros-Ghali. It is a tight-lipped, mismanaged *mess*—confusing not only to outsiders, but also to the corps of international bureaucrats who require at least a semblance of order if they are to churn out reams of paperwork in triplicate.

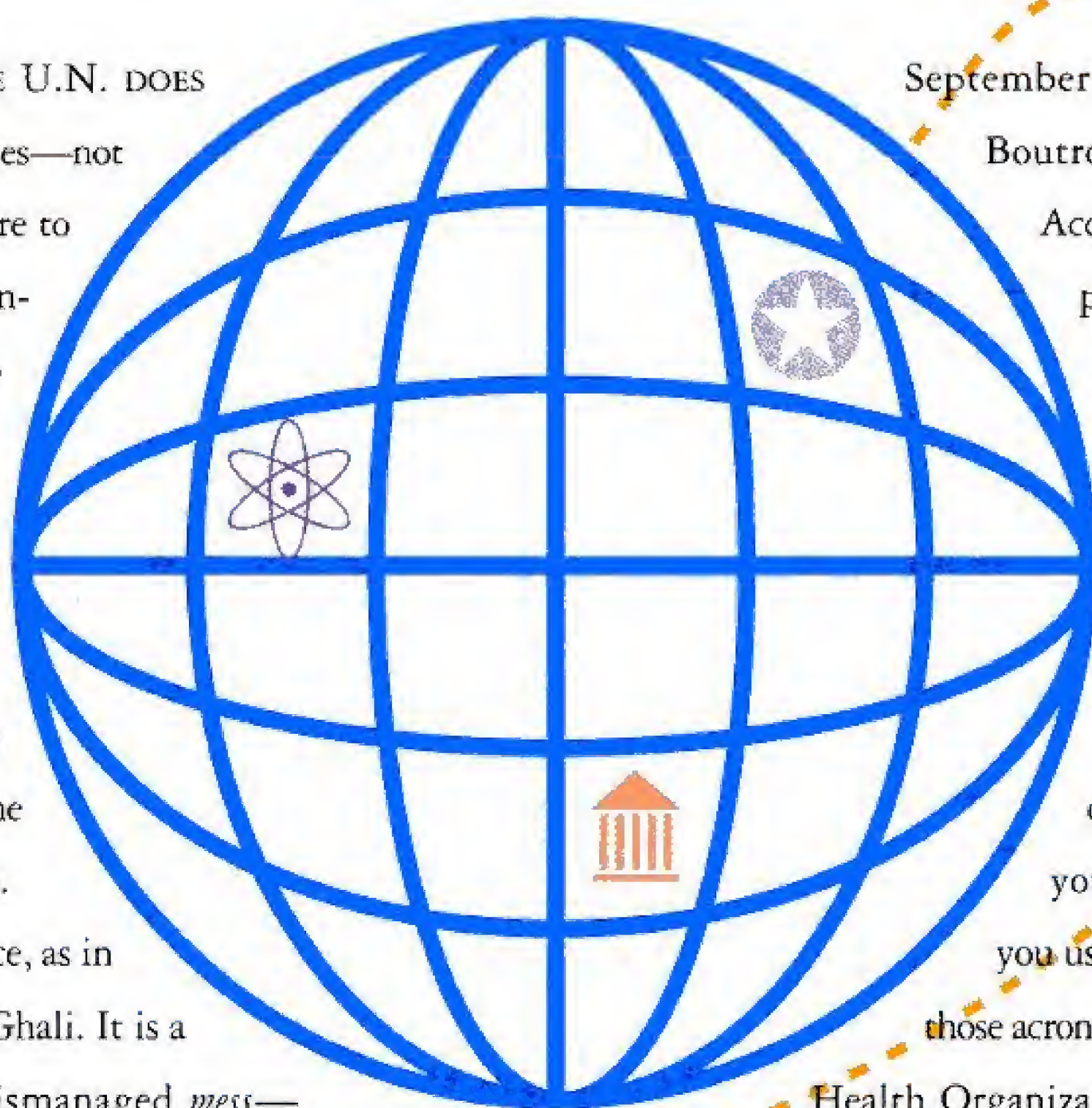
It might help if they had an in-house phone directory. The last one was published in

September 1991, just before Boutros-Ghali took office.

According to a U.N. employee, “You have to call an overworked switchboard to get a person’s number and you don’t know who is in what position. You have to constantly ask, ‘Are you still doing the job you used to do?’” And as for

those acronyms . . . WHO (World Health Organization) and UNFICYP

(United Nations Force in Cyprus) are bad enough. But how about TACOS (Telecommunications and Computer Operations Service), ACABQ (Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), and BIRPI (United International Bureaus for the Protection of International Property)?



by Lance Gould



# the times

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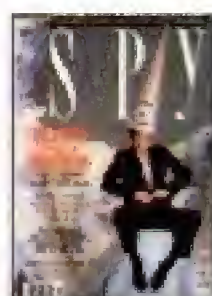
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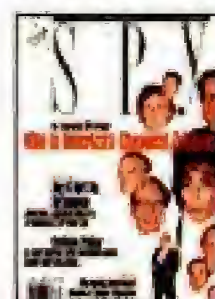
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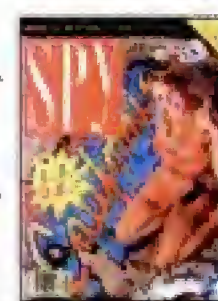
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**Y**es, Diplospeak is Manhattan's lingua franca east of First Avenue. It is practiced by pompous plutocrats with long titles in subcommittees with even longer titles, such as the "Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples," which recently concluded meeting number 1,432.


Although no single example of bureaucratese truly captures the U.N. in all its cartoonish glory, there are two in particular that come pretty darn close. An ongoing war is the unfortunate backdrop for the first, wherein a nation's quest for recognition is stalled by their inability to acquire, of all things, just the right flag. If and when they do get their flag, there's a certain dapper diplomat who may want to take the credit; don't believe him for a second.

### I. Missionary Position

If a state falls in a forest and everyone hears, does that state exist? A simple question, but in a community where semantics, protocol, and double-talk dominate, even the simplest questions can have the most disastrously complex answers. It is under such conditions that, for the first time in its existence, the U.N. is home to a country without a flag (Macedonia), and a flag without a country (Yugoslavia).

Prior to 1991, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia comprised six republics—Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Macedonia. But in 1991, Croatia and Slovenia seceded from the greater Yugoslavia, opening a Pandora's box of exploding national identities. When Bosnia and Macedonia left the nest about a year later, they did so very much as greenhorns to self-determination.

Previously, as autonomous republics in the socialist Yugoslav federation, Bosnia and Macedonia had used variations of the USSR's communist flag to represent themselves. But suddenly, as applicants for U.N. membership, the two fledgling countries could reach the apex of national identification: They each got to pick a flag of their own. So



**Yugoslavia is not much better off than Macedonia. They do have a flag at the United Nations, only it's the wrong one. It's the flag of the socialist Yugoslav federation, which, of course, no longer exists. Or does it?**

the Bosnians and Macedonians hired designers to come up with their respective pole-flappers. Bosnia's designer produced a stunning little number—a blue, white, and gold shield on a snow-white backdrop.

It was Macedonia's flag, however, that transformed the catwalk into a stage for a heated international showdown. Macedonia chose a red field emblazoned with the 16-pointed star of Vergina, a symbol coveted by the Greeks. This "theft" of Hellenic property—along with the theft of the very name Macedonia—led to Greece's objection of Macedonia's application and ultimately to a rejection by the General Assembly.

"The Macedonians went a little far with [the flag]," one diplomat says. "We spoke to them and said, 'Don't be a pain in the neck.' They have all the right to their state, but it's not as if this flag had been their flag for 1,000 years. I think Greece is paranoid, but Macedonia pushed it over the edge."

Diplomatic maneuverings resulted in Security Council Resolution 817, which skirted around the issue of Macedonia's name by referring to the country-in-waiting variously as "the applicant," "the State," and "the State whose application" before finally settling on FYROM, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. And

now? Well, when you talk to the Secretary General's spokesperson, you will be told that there is no Macedonia; when you visit the Mission of FYROM, the nameplate on the door reads "Mission of Macedonia."

Yugoslavia, on the other hand, is not much better off. They do have a flag at the U.N., only it's the wrong one. It's the flag of the socialist Yugoslav federation, which, of course, no longer exists.

Or does it?

S.C. Resolution 777 states that the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia no longer exists and that the new Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY in U.N. parlance) cannot automatically inherit its seat in the General Assembly. Knowing full well that its aggression in Bosnia would preclude it from being readmitted, it has not reapplied for membership. Yugoslavia, such as it is, remains in U.N. limbo.

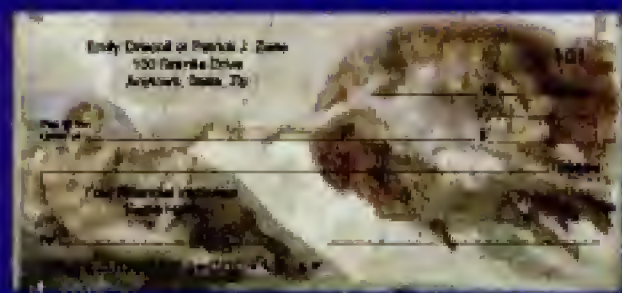
"Yugoslavia's seat in the General Assembly is empty," one diplomat says. "They are not allowed to enter the GA officially, though they are not banned from the U.N. They have the right to distribute their documents, and their diplomats can participate in U.N. activities. They can address the S.C., though not as Yugoslavia, and they cannot address the GA in any way. It's like putting someone in jail and letting them out whenever they want."

Legally, the U.N. Charter allows only two forms of punishment: suspension and expulsion. Because of its institution of apartheid, for example, South Africa was suspended from 1974 until only recently. Still, it was never expelled from the GA. In fact, during the entire two decades of its suspension, the South African nameplate sat unrepresented between Somalia and Spain, never removed.

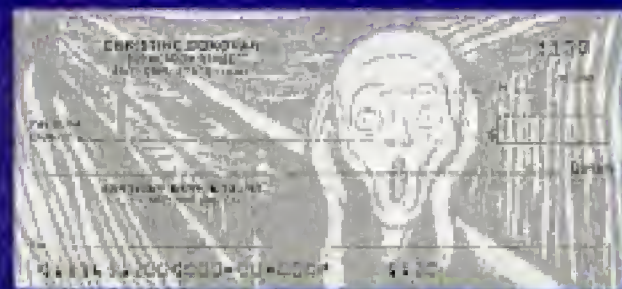
But Yugoslavia has been neither suspended nor expelled. Its GA nameplate has never differentiated between the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; it's just read "Yugoslavia." And so, while a new flag flies in Belgrade (representing the new Yugoslavia), the old flag flies in front of the U.N., representing nothing.



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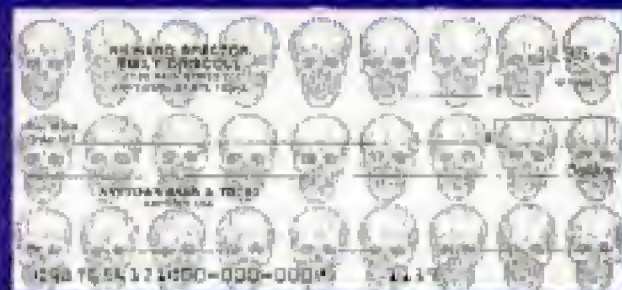
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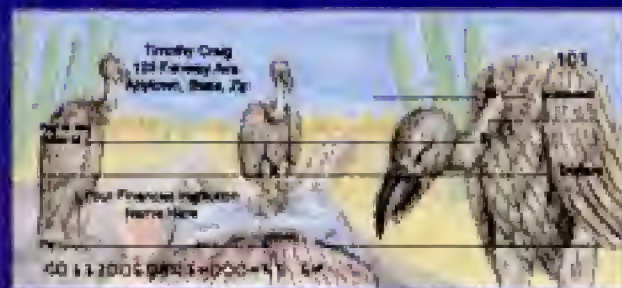
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## II. Robofop

*Decorations awarded from a sovereign state are not a light and funny business.*

So said Ambassador Joseph Verner Reed Jr., the recipient of more than three dozen such decorations, in a *Quest* magazine profile last year. Accompanying the feature was a handsome photo of the ambassador in full regalia in his U.N. office, with but a few of his decorations pinned fastidiously to his coat. An Under Secretary General of the United Nations Secretariat and Special Representative of the Secretary General for Public Affairs, Reed is himself a decoration of sorts: a career diplomat emblematic of the U.N. culture of smug mediocrity.

In a 1992 "article" published by the U.S. Information Agency (the propaganda arm of the U.S. government) and distributed regularly by his office, Reed is described in two ways: as one of "the key officials on the staff [of Boutros-Ghali]" and as a "dapper man who often wears a carnation." Although the latter may be true—it cements his reputation as a "clothes horse" (a U.N. diplomat), as a "bit of a buffoon" (a U.N. journalist), and as a "14-carat nitwit" (former Senator Thomas Eagleton of Missouri)—the former would stretch even the most creative imagination.

His current duties revolve around attending state functions, particularly those for which the Secretary General is conveniently unavailable. "He's on the weddings and funerals beat," according to a U.N. correspondent. "He's actually good at it, and the SG hates that type of thing."

When he received his 1992 U.N. post, Reed commanded an impressive salary. Being the well-heeled son of a prominent New England family that can trace its roots back to the Mayflower, Reed shouldn't have to worry about money—although, as one U.S. diplomat put it, "the *real* purpose of Joe Reed working at the U.N. is that the Reed clan doesn't want him playing with the family fortune."

Having graduated from Deerfield Academy and Yale and after a lengthy stint as David Rockefeller's aide-de-camp at Chase Manhattan Bank, Reed

became Ronald Reagan's overbearing-yet-somehow-presentable Ambassador to Morocco. In due time, he managed to perfect his own very special brand of diplomacy, which, were it not for a few political shortcomings, would have earned him high marks.

"[Reed] was supposed to be the eye and ear of the U.S. in North Africa," said one journalist, who went on to explain that Reed failed to keep Washington abreast of a budding friendship between Moroccan King Hassan II and future Libyan madman Muammar Qaddafi.

The fact is, Reed was better suited to protocol than politics, to redecorating than reconnoitering. While stationed in Morocco, he combined diplomacy with his well-known affinity for quilts. Said Reed: "Not only are they a particularly nice example of American arts and crafts, but they are also inoffensive to our Muslim friends. Islam, you know, frowns upon figurative art, so when I was in Morocco I had quilts put up all over the embassy."

Soon after his ambassadorial appointment, Reed began his quick ascent up the U.N. ladder. In 1985, he was the U.S. representative to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC, the U.N. economic debating society). In 1987, as Under Secretary General of Political and General Assembly Affairs, he held the highest ranking U.N. position among U.S. officials.

But it was in 1989 that Reed attained the pinnacle of protocoldom, leaving the U.N. to serve as White House Chief of Protocol. Still, he's no Emily Post. He distinguishes himself by shamelessly distributing self-promotional gifts, including his own plastic insignia ballpoint pens. As he sees it, *The art of protocol is to set the stage for diplomacy, where diplomats can conduct foreign affairs. If that stage is not carefully scripted and cadenced, you have a recipe for disaster.*

Perhaps he's thinking of May 1991, when the diminutive Queen Elizabeth II spoke at a White House press conference and someone forgot to put a pedestal behind the podium. Thanks to *this* bit of careful scripting,



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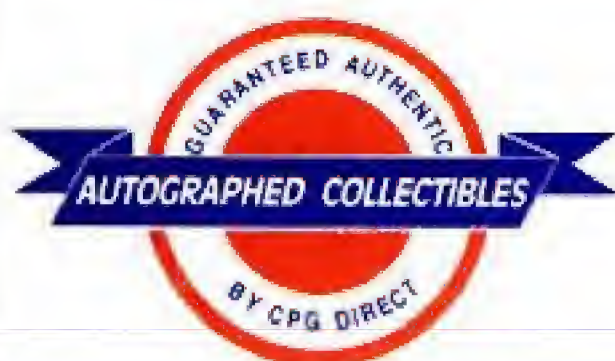
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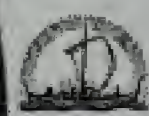
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what was transmitted around the globe was not the full image of her lowness—oops, highness—but of a chapeau that was apparently capable of speaking with a distinctive British accent.

If Reed was embarrassed by the "Talking Hat Affair," he showed true grit by rebounding to perform two of his most impressive protocol triumphs. A U.N. broadcast correspondent offered a description of the first: "One of his major successes (and he would boast about this) was during either a State lunch or dinner at the White House. It was very hot and the air conditioner had broken down. Fish and aspic were being served, and he boasted of having 'saved the day' by serving the aspic in bowls as a consommé."

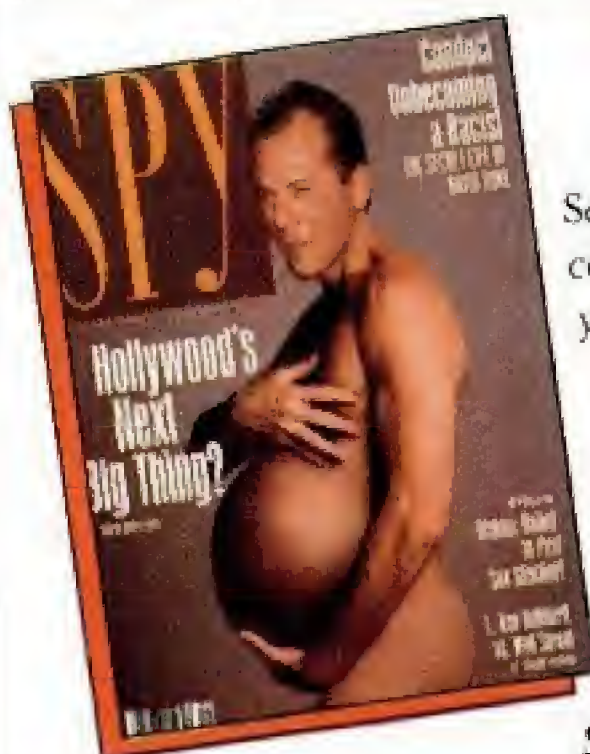
If that wasn't gritty enough, the accomplishment of which Reed is most proud is becoming the first White House Chief of Protocol to have successfully invited to dinner every foreign ambassador in Washington. "It took me 14 months to work through the entire diplomatic corps," he said.

After working through the foreign diplomats in Washington, Reed returned to the U.N. and to his latest position, the title of which is unfortunately too long to inscribe on his insignia pens. One of his responsibilities was originally to coordinate activities for the U.N.'s golden anniversary celebration. But alas, that challenge has been plucked away from him. It is now the purview of his rival Gillian Martin Sorensen (wife of former JFK speech writer Ted Sorensen), who took over not only Reed's responsibilities, but also his spacious office on the 31st Floor.

Yet through it all, Joseph Verner Reed, Jr. manages to remain pleasant. In fact, he conducts his affairs with remarkable resilience and energy. He's so well-dressed, so unflappable...an international superhero, if you will. He's Robofop! Only Robofop could merge his self-referential powers with U.N. acronymophilia. Only Robofop would dare to visit the Galapagos Islands after conducting official business in Ecuador, all in one day.

"Most people do it in a week," he said. "But not JVR." ☺

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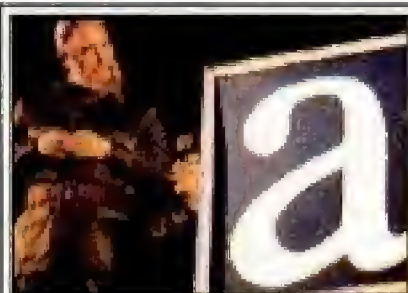




IMAGINE THE MARX BROTHERS IN WOODY ALLEN'S *BANANAS* OR FIDEL CASTRO IN *DUCK SOUP*. CLASSIC COMEDY? YOU BET—EXCEPT THAT IN CUBA, IT'S REAL LIFE. THE GREAT DICTATOR HAS TURNED THE ISLAND NATION INTO AN ABSURD WONDERLAND—COMPLETE WITH MIDGET CHICKENS, COOKING SHOW WITH NO FOOD, AND AN IDEA THAT CAPITALISM CAN SOMEHOW SAVE SOCIALISM. IN SPITE THESE EFFORTS, RECENT DEVELOPMENTS SHOW THAT IT ISN'T WORKING TOO WELL FOR HIM.







WHY CUBA WOULD WANT A SHIPMENT OF M&Ms AND MILKY WAYS IS BEYOND ME, BUT THERE WE WERE, SETTING SAIL FROM KEY WEST TO HAVANA IN A CANDY ARMADA. WHILE THE MISSION SEEMED ABSURD, THE CARGO OF SWEETS MADE SENSE: "M&Ms MAKE FRIENDS" SAYS THE SLOGAN, AND FIDEL NEEDS AS MANY FRIENDS AS HE CAN GET.

If only Castro's comrades in Eastern Europe hadn't dumped communism. Without the Soviet Union's financial support, Cuba has plunged into what Fidel calls the "Special Period," in which meat, milk, eggs, and bread have been tightly rationed and people flee by the hundreds on rafts made of nothing more than inner tubes. Fidel is in deep, and unfortunately for the Cuban people, the candy flotilla hasn't been the only odd occurrence as his schemes to make money have gotten progressively *más loco*:

- Short on chicken feed, Fidel distributed baby chickens for people to raise at home. But the chickens never grew—the people didn't have chicken feed either.

- Cosmetics and toiletries are all but unavailable, so the government suggested recipes for perfume, deodorant, shampoo, and skin conditioners made from sugar, lemons,

and kitchen by-products.

- After a generation of cursing Miami's Cuban exile as traitorous "worms," Fidel has invited them all back to spend their *yanqui* cash to boost his economy, and has even worked with Miami charter companies to offer package deals for the exiles.

- When Benetton opened two shops in Havana, Fidel posed for a promotional photo.

- Despite closing the bordellos three decades ago and teaching the hookers to read, Fidel has tacitly allowed prostitution to come back, doing little to stop the skin trade that attracts so many male tourists.

- Fidel closed the casinos when he took power, but has brought back gambling with a Havana-based cruise ship that features roulette, blackjack, and rolled-on-the-spot Cuban cigars.

- Eager to promote tourism, Fidel made a rare public appearance to

watch scantily clad go-go girls dance during the opening of a new resort.

- Advertising from foreign companies has been allowed and welcomed on the socialist state's television programs.

The nuttiness peaked, however, when Fidel declared—in flawless double-speak—that he had found the key to saving his socialist system: capitalism.

"Let's build an economy with more solid bases," Fidel said at a meeting of the Cuban Communist Party.

"Although it will be open to foreign capital to get the country moving, it will maintain its socialist character."

What he meant to say is that Cuba's bad old days are starting to look good, but he'll keep quoting Marx as he turns back the clock to 1958—when Havana was a Mafia-run Sodom and Gomorrah and the countryside was owned by the United Fruit Company.

The problem is that Fidel has grown accustomed to having it his way. For 35 years—since the day he marched on Havana as a 32-year-old attorney and revolutionary—he has had the pleasure of ruling his own island nation of what are now 11 million inhabitants. He has outlasted his early contemporaries like Kennedy and Khrushchev and has spent his entire professional career as Cuba's maximum leader.

At public appearances he's still energetic, a capable schmoozer, and a tireless public speaker.

Although his private life is tightly guarded—and off-limits in Cuba's state-run press—he has the reputation of being a ladies' man, even earning the stud nickname *el caballo*, or the horse.

As we pull into Marina Hemingway on Havana's outskirts, the rumor is that *el caballo* might make an appearance. We gladly pile off as Cuban men unload the candy, and government functionaries load us onto a tour bus that follows the aid to old folks' homes and a center for children with mental and physical handicaps. The kids get the M&Ms, but the scene is sad as they open the alien packages of plain and peanut. The candy *has* made friends, but Fidel never shows up.

A few blocks from my hotel is the old presidential palace, now Fidel's grandest house of propaganda. After dictator Fulgencio Batista moved out, Fidel turned the huge joint, with its interiors by Tiffany, into the Museum of the Revolution. Like the Hair Club for Men, the museum makes its point with "before" and "after" pictures—prostitutes in the street, hungry children, the decadent nightlife of cabarets and casinos. In recent days, the pictures have made a point not so favorable to Castro.





As one Cuban youth described his country: "It's just like 1958, but with hunger." FROM TOP: Rough daily life in Cuba, collecting buckets of water from the sewers, an inner tube is prepared for a long journey.

In the doorway of the old palace, overlooking Havana Harbor, I ask one of the museum's curators about the pictures. Aristides González agrees that times are tough, but says socialism's charm is that misery is equally distributed. I ask him about the "before" pictures of prostitutes and about

women I see today hopping into cars on the Malecón, Havana's seaside drive. González says there is a difference between the old *prostitutas* and the *jineteras*, or hustlers, of Castro's waning years. In essence, what they do is the same, but the reason they do it is different. "Before, they did it to feed

their children, but now they do it to get a pair of jeans," he says.

I want a second opinion. I get it, hours after the museum is closed, when I tour Havana's cabarets. "Cuban *puta* is the cheapest in the world," a petty bureaucrat from the government's National Institute of Tourism tells me as we watch a bump-and-grind show, and food is everyone's motive.

"Any one of these girls," my new friend says with a wave of his hand, "a hundred dollars, she's yours for the night."

"A hundred bucks?" I exclaim. "And how about for a cocktail?"

"Sure," he says, without giving it a thought, "that would do it, too."

They're clearly rusty on this capitalism concept. Either a drink or a hundred dollars gets you a night in the sack? *Si amigo*. Pay as you can, this is socialism: From each according to his means, to each according to his needs.

The *puta* price range is so wide because some women, like 19-year-old Carmen, are looking for love as well.

Carmen befriends some Americans, including myself, and she invites us to her one-room apartment in colonial Old Havana. We climb four flights in the dark to her flat, the most distinct feature of which is a chicken coop that dangles above a loft bed where Carmen and her sister sleep. The

half-dozen chicks are government handouts for families to raise at home, part of a program to provide eggs and meat in the middle of the Special Period. Make no mistake—the idea also takes a bite out of Fidel's chicken-feed bill.

I check out the chicks and do a double take when I realize that they don't look like chicks, but like chick-size chickens. "They just won't grow," Carmen says. Midget chickens? No, Carmen explains. Nothing to feed them. The government's scheme has a fatal flaw: If Fidel can't afford the chicken feed, how can Carmen?

Carmen's nosy neighbor overhears our discussion of tiny urban livestock, and interrupts. "When the Special Period came you didn't see as many dogs and cats in the streets," he says. "We have to be inventive."

Carmen says Noel is crazy, but her 17-year-old sister, Eileen, disagrees. The beefsteak sandwiches sold on the black market? Kitty patty, she says.

Cuba's quest for food is a symbol of all that's happening on the island. Fidel understands that the way to a country's heart is through its stomach, so at the outset of the Special Period he made a telephone call for help. On the other end of Fidel's phone line sat Cuba's Julia Child, Nitza Villapol, ready to serve the revolution.

Fidel's request was simple: No matter how





FIDEL UNDERSTANDS THAT THE WAY TO A COUNTRY'S HEART IS THROUGH ITS STOMACH, SO AT THE ONSET OF THE "SPECIAL PERIOD" HE MADE A TELEPHONE CALL FOR HELP. HIS REQUEST WAS SIMPLE: NO MATTER HOW BAD THE SHORTAGES ARE, KEEP THE COOKING SHOW ON THE AIR. THE PLAN HAD ONLY ONE SMALL PROBLEM—NO FOOD.

bad the food shortages are, keep the cooking show on the air. Not only would Nitza teach Cubans to make do, but she would lend a sheen of normalcy to a country that was slipping quickly into the past. Nitza agreed, Fidel hung up, and then it hit her. Fidel's plan had one, not-so-small problem. The people had no food. She had a cooking show.

I drop in on 70-year-old Nitza in her comfortable apartment in the once affluent Vedado neighborhood of Havana. The woman who taught three generations of Cubans to cook speaks flawless English, as well she should—she's a New Yorker by birth. Although she and her communist parents moved from Manhattan to Havana 60 years ago, she still has the attitude. With true chutzpah, she chides Cubans for their high-cholesterol pork cravings and then confess-

es her lust for pastrami. "I don't care if it's fatty," she snaps when I ask her about the double standard. "I love pastrami on rye with mustard and pickles—kosher pickles."

Forget about finding a good deli in Havana, especially now, when Cuban staples like yuca and potatoes are the only things filling pantries and stomachs. The few foods available aren't much to base a cooking show around, but as Nitza points out, orders are orders. "When Castro commands, it is the command of the law," she says.

His directive to keep cooking was a tall order for Nitza, but having hosted *Cooking in a Minute* since 1951, she knew how to improvise, even when week after week it was the same old thing. "You can tell them lots things about yuca. You can expand their views, tell them how they eat yuca in Africa," Nitza says.

Along with food, her

recipes cover some household items that have become scarce. "Once I showed how you can substitute sugar for detergent," she says. To scrub something clean, she told viewers, you mix soap with sugar, which is naturally abrasive. Fidel's government actually took a great interest in home-made cleansers and cosmetics when the Special Period started.

The magazine *Bohemia* printed formulas for the concoctions, like perfume made from alcohol and flowers, hand conditioner from vinegar and water, an anti-dandruff solution from orange peel and water, and a skin softener from honey and lemon juice. They even ran a recipe for vinegar; the magazine suggested making it with water, sugar, and a little citrus juice.

*Necessity is the mother of invention*—in a country built on slogans, this one has joined the ideological pantheon, and kitchens around Cuba have become laboratories. Rumor has it that cravings for beefsteak are satisfied by grapefruit steak. Why waste a perfectly good grapefruit rind when you can do the following:

1. Peel one grapefruit making sure that the skin comes off in no more than two pieces.

2. Marinate the rind in a stew of water, garlic, and any other spices.

3. Add an espresso for color and flavor.

4. Fry in its own juices until it firms to the texture of a thin-cut steak.

5. Serve underneath rice or beans so you can't see what you're eating.

As Nitza talks of hard times and the revolution, my eyes wander out her window and catch the orange glow of sunset lighting a hotel whose history is a parable of Castro's rise and fall. In the



1950s it was built as the Havana Hilton. After the 1959 revolution, Fidel turned the Hilton into the Habana Libre, a sign that Havana was free of imperialism.

Fast-forward three decades. The Soviet Union collapsed and Cuba lost \$5 billion a year in subsidies, 40 percent of its economy, and 85 percent of its foreign trade. That's when the Habana Libre





Oddly, though his power appears to be waning in the declining days of a socialist Cuba, Fidel at times can still display an influence not applicable to more influential leaders. ABOVE: This infamous shot, taken at the opening of a nightclub in Cayo Coco, caused such an uproar when it was published that Castro ordered the negative to be destroyed and the image was removed from Associated Press wires. LEFT: Boys and their toys—Fidel poses with mall-mogul Luciano Benetton.

and its musty hallways entered the picture again. In 1991, Fidel let foreign companies become half owners of joint-venture hotels. A Spanish hotel firm, Guitart, took him up on the offer in 1993, and now the place is known as the Habana Guitart.

The Habana Libre sign remains, but, as a Cuban twentysomething tells me, "Any day now it will say Hilton again."

He sees his country coming full circle, but doesn't find it very funny. "It's just like 1958, but with hunger," he says.

The younger generation doesn't seem to have Nitza's sense of revolutionary purpose. They're dying to get to America—really dying. Of the thousands of Cubans who make it to the Florida Keys on inner-tube rafts and rickety boats, a vast majority are in their twenties. When it comes to feeling cheated by the older generation, Cuban youth has the whiny Americans beat. Fidel's Communist Youth Union has tried to appease them with rock concerts and pizza, but the kids aren't convinced by the group's slogans such as "Yes for Cuba" and "*¡Somos feliz aquí!*"—"we are happy here."

Even in Havana's school yards there is room for rebellion. Fidel's system has taught children songs like "L'Internationale," the socialist anthem that begins, "Arise, ye workers of starvation," and goes on to extol the virtues of the proletariat. But starvation, it turns out, isn't as fun as the shopping malls and fast food enjoyed by these kids' cousins in Florida. Among some kids, a counterrevolutionary version of "L'Internationale" has become popular:

OH, LONG LIVE THE AMERICANS  
LONG LIVE THE CHEWING GUM AND HAMS  
LONG LIVE THE EXILE WORMS  
AND LET'S HOPE ANOTHER INVASION COMES.  
THEN WE'LL HAVE COLD COCA-COLA  
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WE'LL ALL LIVE IN FANCY HOUSES  
AND ALL WITHOUT REVOLUTION.

The week is over, and in the taxi out to the airport I'm happy to return to the land of the worms. The charter flight to Miami will take just 40 minutes. From lifting off in Havana to sitting down at a cafe in Miami's South Beach, it will be just three hours, including a loss-of-hydraulics incident on the jet, delayed luggage, and a U.S. Customs check to see if we've violated the embargo. At a cafe on Ocean Drive, I will watch the vintage cars cruise by, listen to the rhythms of imported Cuban mambo, and take in a fashion shoot.

But still in the Havana taxi, I see the highways out of the city are lined with billboards of the revolution; the cheerful "Socialism or Death" is a favored greeting for motorists. But it's the bright green billboard with plain white lettering that catches my eye as the taxi pulls into José Martí International Airport. "United Colors of Benetton," it says.

Apparently, what Karl Marx *really* meant to say is that a socialist state must court bourgeois consumerism in order to industrialize, and that the ideal dictator must pose for fashion advertisements. While Fidel hasn't turned in his olive-green fatigues for a big fuchsia sweater, he's come as close as it gets. ☺



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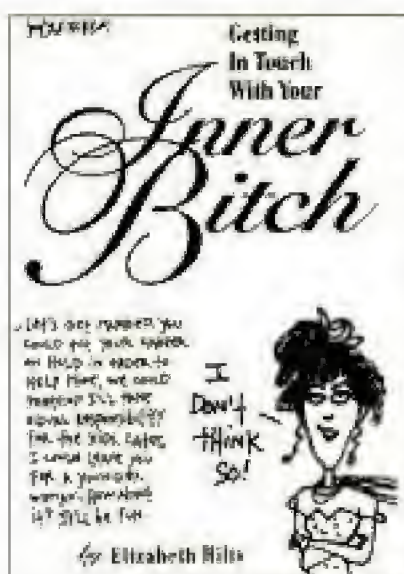


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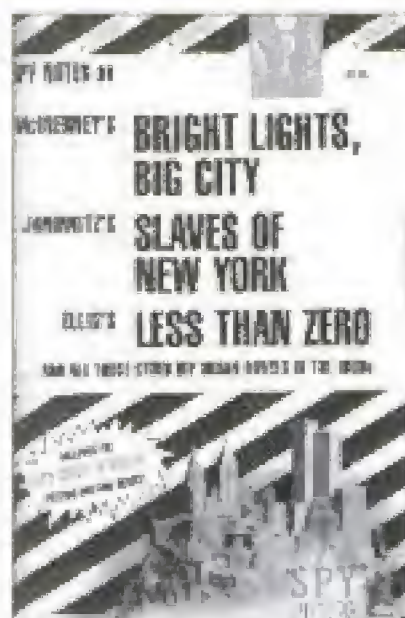




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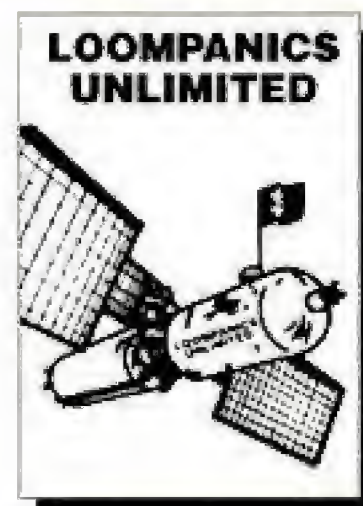
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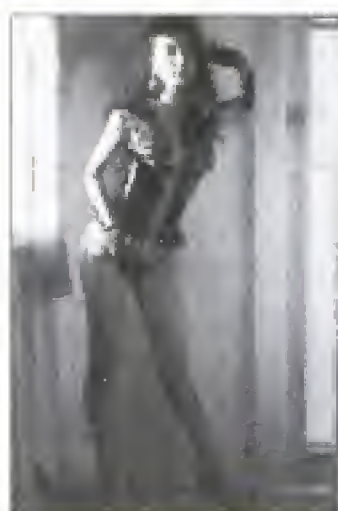
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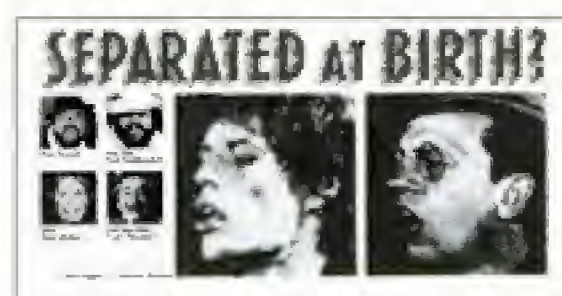
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# What's So Damn Funny Anyway?

EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE, when I'm feeling just too damn good, I turn on the TV and channel surf till I find one of those generic-but-unfortunately-popular stand-up comedy shows. Within nanoseconds, all previous perkiness has gone the way of national health care and my face sinks into the lugubrious lines of the couple in "American Gothic." Stone-faced, I watch an endless parade of McJokesters soft-peddling its way through tired renditions of What It's All About—airline food and sex, usually.

But what of politics? Social commentary? Criticism? Fun? Please. These are the nineties.

What made those people we quote over and over (Oscar Wilde, Dorothy Parker, anyone from Monty Python) funny? *Fearlessness*. Clever put-downs and witty insults jabbed in the face of anyone and anything that felt, well, wrong somehow. Like the time Groucho Marx was told he couldn't swim in a restricted pool. He pondered for a minute, then asked: "Well, since my son's only half Jewish, can he go in up to his waist?" Or when George S. Kaufman, then drama editor at the *New York Times*, was asked by a press agent how to get a leading lady's name in the paper. "Shoot her," said Kaufman.

If today's editor said something like that, he or she would be blacklisted from Kansas to Calcutta—not to mention sued up the yin-yang. We're running scared these days, often for good reason: Who knows what throwaway sentiment might inadvertently offend someone's delicate sensibilities? With the wrath of judge, jury, and media close behind. Reminds



me of the old joke: How many feminists does it take to screw in a light bulb? THAT'S NOT FUNNY.

At this rate, joking, like smoking, will be something you can only safely do behind closed doors (or in a designated joking area). True, I was brought up the old-fashioned way; I was told to be civil to strangers and to drive safely, among other things. Implicit in this arrangement was the belief that pointed barbs, not pointed sticks, are the weapons of choice when someone does something, well, idiotic. Every able-bodied citizen was fair game. Not anymore.

These days, the Gumps have taken over. Everyone's a Gump. Wide-eyed and inane, just brimming with pithy little sayings. Life is like a box of chocolates and all that. Be nice, never criticize, and tippy-toe around everyone because they're so fragile that even the tiniest fragment of negativity will send them into a tailspin of something too horrible to contemplate.

That sound you just heard is the death knell of humor.

Let's face it: viciousness is *funny*. In the wickedly hilarious British import, *Waiting for God*, that my PBS station (bless 'em) runs after





In the hilarious satirical film *The Producers*, writer/director Mel Brooks created the classic bad-taste production number of all time: "Springtime for Hitler."

homophobic—or just a plain jerk. Personally, I don't care what you call me, as long as you misspell my name on the subpoena.

Thoughtful, intelligent viciousness used to be *de rigueur*, especially if you were

in the media or public life. As Mark Twain pointed out, "It could probably be shown by facts and figures that there is no distinctly native American criminal class except Congress." When Disraeli was asked the difference between a misfortune and a calamity, he replied: "If Gladstone fell into the Thames, that would be a misfortune. If anyone pulled him out again, that, I suppose, would be a calamity."

These days, public life isn't usually politics but entertainment, which isn't very entertaining.

**Think about it.** If a whole bunch of people can get riled up because the hyenas in *The Lion King* were misinterpreted as a "minority" and as representing a "lower social class"—having been "portrayed" by an African-American woman (Whoopi Goldberg) and a Latin-American (Cheech Marin)—just think of the furor if these weren't merely cartoon animals in a Disney children's film, for God's sake! Or if the top-dog lion had the voice of, say, Clint Eastwood (a white guy) instead of James Earl Jones (a black guy).

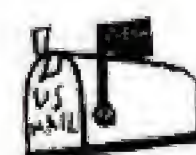
the family hour, Diana, the central character, is a mean-spirited, unpleasant old woman who'll say anything. Usually it's the unvarnished, fearless truth (there's that word again). Using humor to speak the truth is more than simple bravery; it allows us to vent our frustration and anger at whomever's bugging us without burning crosses on their front lawns.

Far more polite and, I daresay, environmentally sound in the bargain. The civilized choice. Freud himself once said: "The first human being who hurled an insult instead of a stone was the founder of civilization." Oh well. I guess all that civilization stuff was becoming just too much of a good thing. Satire, like any other lethal weapon, needed to be strictly controlled.

At the last, gloomy meeting of the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists, some members expressed the fear that satire is now seen as "a weapon of elitist repression rather than social critique." Which explains why satire today is as daring as a *Lassie* remake. Dip your toes into the murky waters of irony and you'll be called racist, ageist, sexist,

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It's no wonder that we no longer hear any flights of fancy along the lines of Monty Python's description of a mollusk as the "prancing, limp-wristed queen of the deep." Or that we don't have a modern-day version of Dorothy Parker, either.

Fact is, I don't like being nice. Doesn't come naturally to me. I want to make fun of anyone and anything, anywhere and any time, providing I'm clever in my assault and am provided with an adequate target. I'm sick of mealy-mouthed platitudes, I'm sick of wondering whether I should call somebody a "practitioner" or a "person," since "man" is obviously a dirty word. And it's all ass-backwards anyway, since it's not the words but the deeds that

**Bring back viciousness and truth and absurdity, and let the chips fall where they may. Bring back the outrageous theater of the absurd. Picket for the right to intelligent parody. And take Oliver Stone. Please.**

make injustice. As Barbara Ehrenreich says, "Verbal uplift is not the revolution."

It might as well be, given how seriously the thought police take it. Real police, too. Like the deputy sheriff in Norway who pulled over some guy for a routine check. The disgruntled driver called him an onion. You read right, an onion. The deputy charged the driver with insulting an officer; the court, in its infinite wisdom, ruled that "uttering the word 'onion' was an 'illegal affront.'"

Vegetables aside, the real tragedy of political correctitude running rampant—to the point where it becomes self-censorship—is how it polarizes otherwise reasonable people into deathly opposing camps. Bye-bye perspective. Farewell humor, mon amour.

Laughing at something allows you to see things dispassionately, without getting your jockey shorts in a twist. (If I'd said "panties in a bunch," how many more of you would have been offended?)

## Letter from Canada

Issues seen through the lens of humor are clearer, less foggy and obfuscated. Orwell's *Animal Farm* has endured better and longer than all the jargon-filled antifacism tracts ever written.

Part of the problem may be that, in order to satirize something, you need to understand what it is. These days, this is no simple matter. Maybe that's what the whining about victims and survivors is all about: distraction and avoidance. Or maybe life's just too damn easy these days—gallows humor flourished in Eastern Europe under communism and on this continent during the Depression.

**Humor's more** than some cute entertainment, but it's gone all 12-step and teetotaler. All that's left is the court jester—lame, silly people who, like their Shakespearean counterparts, are feeble, shrill, and a little obscene. Enough already! Bring back the real clowns and caricaturists and comics, and let them say things worth saying. Bring back viciousness and truth and absurdity, and let the chips fall where they may (at least they'll be visible and not up somebody's sleeve). Bring back the creative curse and the outrageous theater of the absurd. Strike up a chorus of "Springtime for Hitler." Picket for the right to intelligent parody. And take Oliver Stone. *Please*.

"I cannot listen to other people blaming their mothers for another year," Oprah said. "I have to move on." Great idea, let's all move on. All together now, point fingers and laugh at silly people. Like the woman who dressed as a chicken and threw pies at Kenny Rogers during a concert to protest his ownership of a chain of chicken restaurants. Or the animal-rights group who picketed the Maine Lobster Festival for cruelty to crustaceans. (Retaliate by chanting "Lemon Butter!") Finally, laugh uproariously the next time somebody slips on a banana peel. It's time.

Tilting at windmills is best done—as Don Quixote understood and the PC crowd does not—with humor. And a sharp spear or two. Trust me, that windmill ain't going to fall no matter how many times you jab it with a Q-Tip.

—Susan Baxter





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**SM 35**, 6', photographer. Looking for a skinny, dark haired girl, 25-35. Call Ext. 11518

**SWM** Looking to meet a female of any race. I have blonde hair, blue eyes, 6'2, athletic. Love to have fun. Call Ext. 816407

**SM**, looking for single White woman 25-35, who loves to rock & roll, loves to play. If you want to play with a phone instead of in person, I like that too. Almost anything goes. See if you can come up with something I haven't done. Call Ext. 816324

**SM 35**, fit, mature, independent, intelligent, compassionate. Like quiet evenings, dining out, traveling, music & books. Looking for a female friend, 25-32, any race. Someone intelligent, willing to have a friendship & possible lasting relationship & has a good heart. Call Ext. 19969

**SWM 19**, long blonde hair, green eyes, slim, 110 lbs., 5'4, very sexy, seductive, also experienced. Looking for sexy & open minded, uninhibited woman 18-26. Someone willing to do anything to have a good & really hot time. No men or couples. Call Ext. 11043

**SWM 18**, 6'2, 190 lbs, brown hair, blue eyes. Like biking, going out to eat, quiet times at home. Seeking a White male, ages 18-42, similar interests, to have fun & possible relationship. Call Ext. 11363

We are an attractive couple looking for an attractive lady to share time with. We hope you are very open minded to new ideas we might have. Call Ext. 19898

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**SF 5'7**, blonde, hazel eyes, physically fit. Looking for a mature, financially secure man to share the finer things in life & just having fun. I enjoy dancing, the theater, movies & love the beach & the country & especially quiet times. Call Ext. 11469

**SWF** Blonde hair, blue eyes. Looking for SW Italian males, ages 18-23 who like to party, have fun & be at least 5'5 with a good build & a very good heart. Must not be afraid to show your feelings. Call Ext. 11441

**SWM Jim**, 25, brown hair & eyes, 195 lbs, Italian. Looking for SF 18-25, must be into going to concerts at the park & just hanging out even if it's just at home. Call Ext. 11158

**SWM 34**, professional, not looking for a relationship, just looking to go out to dinner with a nice lady, 30-45. Looking to have a very nice evening & make new friends. Call Ext. 19999

**SM 6'1**, brown curly brown hair, brown eyes, dark complexion, loves sports, all types of music, all types of food. Looking for woman who can treat a man right where we can kick back & enjoy the evening. Looking for a woman who can take me out & treat me like a king. Call Ext. 11126

**SM 33**, Italian descent, 6'1, 235 lbs, brown hair, hazel eyes, easy going, down to earth, caring & sensitive. Like to go to Atlantic City, bowling, the movies, going out to dinners, taking long walks & rides, quiet nights at home. Call Ext. 11447

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**SF Slim**, 27, 5'2, body builder, brown eyes. Seeking a discrete relationship with a 20-40 year old woman, blonde hair. Drug & disease free. I like the beaches & everything. Call Ext. 11290

We are looking for preferably couples or guys or girls, (bi girls). I'm a male, 5'11, 185 lbs. She's a beautiful blonde, 101 lbs, 5'5. Call Ext. 11437

## LOS ANGELES-213 AREA CODE

**SF** College student, 5'3. Looking for anyone 18-25. Looking for a very intelligent, romantic man. I'm very fun to be with. I'm employed. Call Ext. 73548

**SF 33**, petite & attractive, down to earth humor & a lot of common sense. Interested in a relationship with a single Black male, 33-40 who is a real man with the rare capacity to be sensitive & considerate of my feelings as I would be of his. He should be tall, handsome, energetic & humorous. Well groomed is important too. Call Ext. 73484

**SBF 5'3**, pleasant to the eyes as well as to the heart. Told I'm erotic, attractive, warm, caring & easy going. Enjoy movies, music, theater, dining, dancing, long walks. Call Ext. 73487

**SF 32**, full figured, seeking SBM 28-40, with a good sense of humor, loves the beach & recreation. Career minded & loves to have fun. Please no drugs. Call Ext. 73275

**SBF** looking for a single male, 5'8 or taller, race is open, kind, faithful, honest, & good sense of humor. Doesn't matter as long as you make the sparks fly. Likes amusement parks & walks. Like to have a good time. Call Ext. 73442

**SM 6'1**, 19, good dancer, brown eyes, brown skin, girls say I'm very attractive. Looking for a lady 18-22 who likes to party, loves going out, going fishing, dancing. Looking for a girl who will reach out to me. Looking for a relationship. Call Ext. 72995

**SM** Very attractive, long hair rocker type looking for sincere, smart, honest female for concerts, sports events, romantic evenings. Call Ext. 73800

**SBM 26**, 5'4, 140 lbs., ad agency art director/sales account rep., financially stable. Seeks interesting relationship with serious goal orientated female 24-30+ if you're irresistible charming, 5'3-5'5, sensual, gentle, & only have a place in your heart for that special person. Enjoys candlelight dinners, traveling. Call Ext. 73184

**SM**, cross between Harrison Ford & Mel Brooks, that's what people have told me. Love Woody Allen, Seinfeld sense of humor. Very interested in art, theater, dance, dancing, skiing, tennis. Business causes me to travel a great deal but also travel for pleasure. Attracted to slender caring women with great smiles. Call Ext. 71340

**SF 21**, 5'6. Seeks butch women only. One who's outgoing, down to earth, has no personal problems or hang ups. Ages 21-31. Call Ext. 73837

## LOS ANGELES-310 AREA CODE

**SBF 25**, I'm man's best friend; I don't bite, scratch, chew on the furniture or even tear up the trash, I'm house broken & affectionate. I like to go dancing, to the movies & travel. Looking for a SM, race is open, 5'7 or taller, employed & with a sense of humor & very high self esteem. You should also be a nonsmoker, drug free & a light drinker. Call Ext. 73739

**SF 5'10**, 39, blue eyes, long hair, employed, attractive & fun to be around. Looking for SWM 35-55, who's interested in sailing, motor sports, water sports, being outside. I enjoy cooking & candlelight romantic dinners. Someone who is emotionally involved & interested in a committed relationship. Call Ext. 73005

**SF 38**, entrepreneur business person. Looking for someone who enjoys dancing, exploring different types of foods, going to movies, loves the beach. Looking for someone who is energetic. I love to work out & I'm looking for someone who'd be able to go to the gym with me. Seeking someone in my same age group who has an open mind & loves to live life to its fullest. Call Ext. 73304

**SF 26**, African American, pre law, employed, 96 lbs. Enjoy intelligent conversations & walks on the beach. I'm a nature lover & animal lover. Looking for a SBM 26-30 who is outgoing, has a great sense of humor, good self esteem, a good sense about himself & who he is. Call Ext. 73141

**SF 5'10**, red hair, blue eyes, freckles, Irish, employed. Like to sail. Looking for someone who enjoys being outdoors, likes to travel & has had some interesting life experiences. I'm 39 & like motor sports. Am open to dating younger men & men quite a bit older. Looking for a committed relationship. I'm considered a romantic person. Call Ext. 73005

**SM** jazz musician, tall, 6'2, dark, athletic build, have an interesting life. I would like to share it with you & tell you more about what I do & hear all about what you do. Call Ext. 73628

**SM 23**, exotic dancer, black hair, 180 lbs, 5'6. Looking for a woman. My interests are walking on the beach, candlelight dinners, having fun. I'm fun to be with. Call Ext. 73531

**SM** looking for a gorgeous lady 18-28, who is interested in a luxurious life. Call Ext. 73480

**SWM 36**, artist, like to have good time. Love summer, like to have lazy fun. Looking for woman, 25-35, who enjoys children, have twin girls, great kids. Looking for stimulating conversation & I'm funny. Call Ext. 72969

**SBM 32**, 6'2, 190 lbs, honest, internationally traveled, respectful business broker. I like music, travel & plays. Never married & have no kids. In search of a SF, 24-39, 5'5-6'3, very shapely, high intellect woman of the 90's. Should enjoy quiet evenings, intimacy & new adventures. Must be very practical & communicative. My turn offs are bad breath, poor hygiene & one who is self centered. I'm a socially conscious gentleman & love to share new things that most men never learn about. Let's be friends first. Call Ext. 72686

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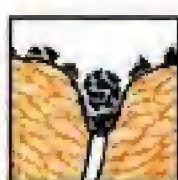
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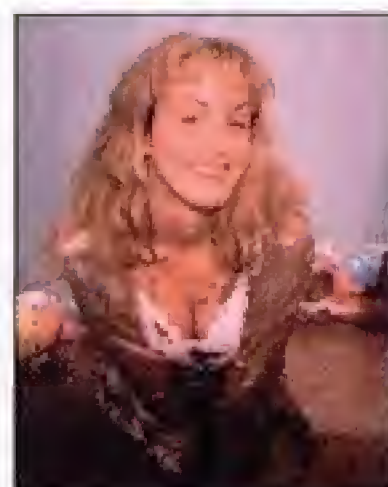


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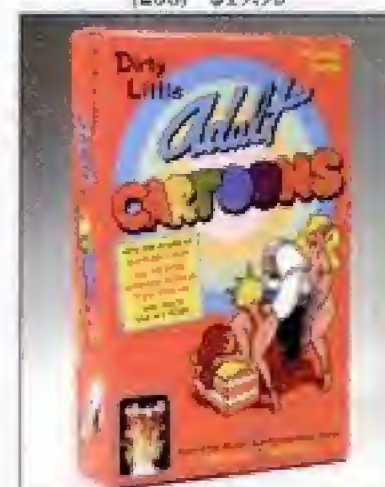
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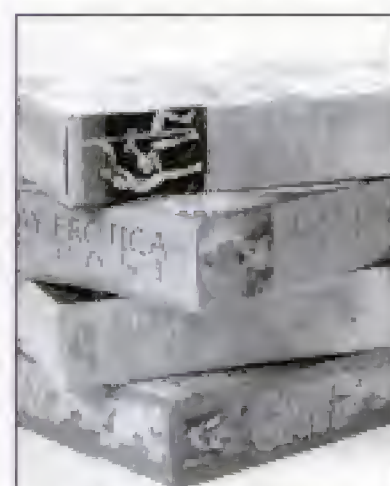


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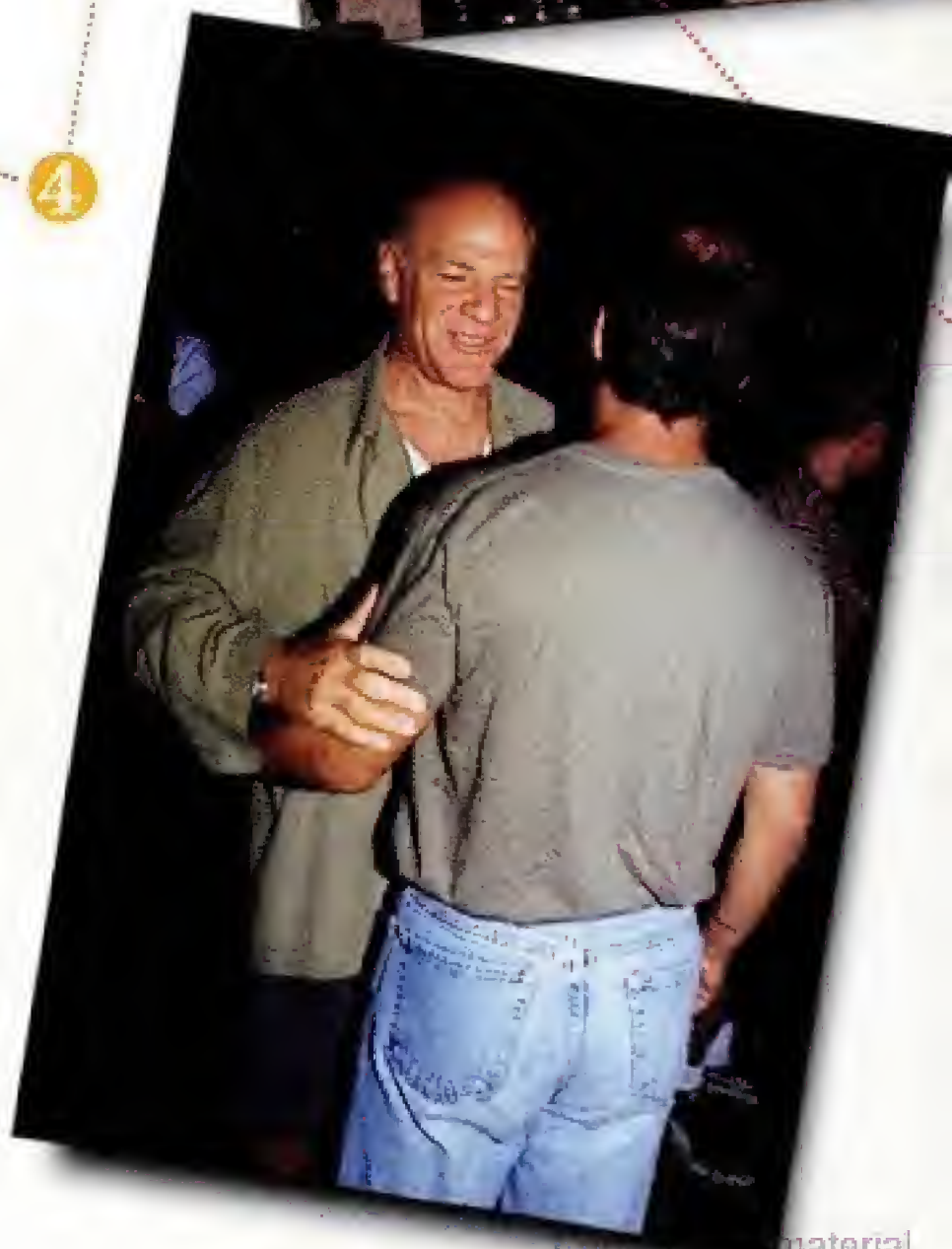
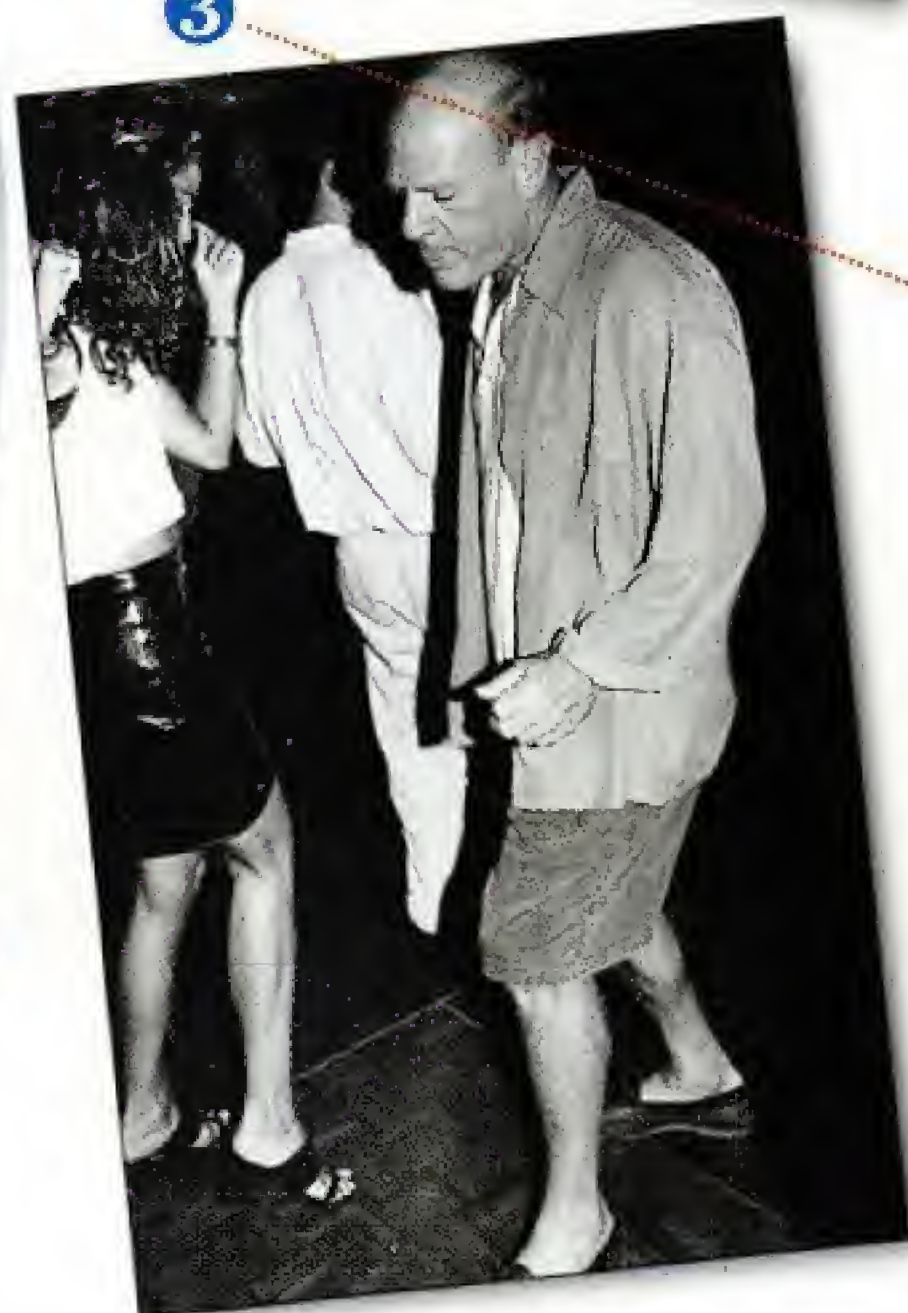
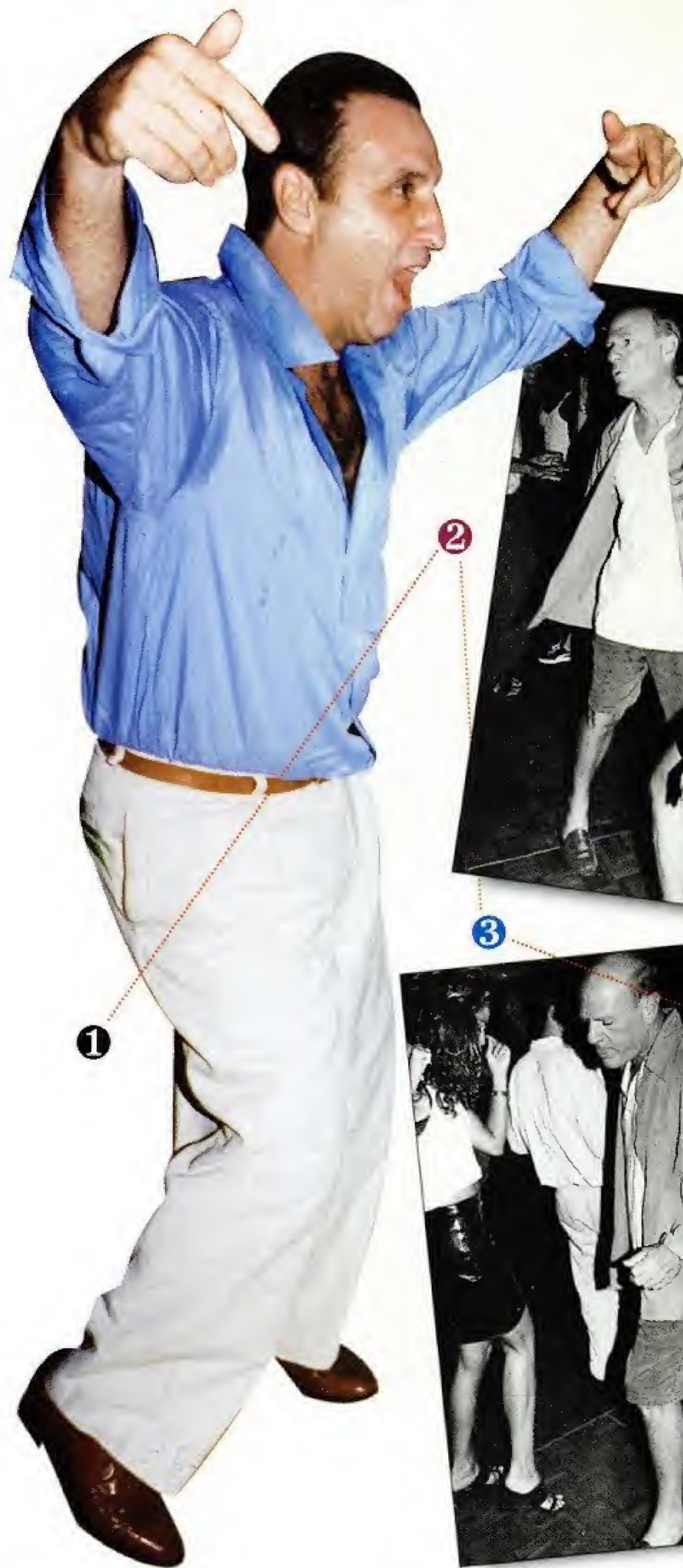
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11



1 Martial-arts expert Ron Silver demonstrates the t'ai chi position, "Sweaty Monkey."

2 Dancing fool Barry Diller does the Mambo... 3 the Electric Slide... 4 and settles in for a slow dance.

5 Light-fingered crooner Frank Sinatra hums, "Whoops, there goes another wallet, ker-plop!"

6 & 7 One of these Stallones is made of plastic. Can you guess which?

8 "Hey, Lady!" bellows pocket-pool hustler Jerry Lewis.

9 Lopsided Anna Nicole Smith steps out with her new great-grandson.

10 "Down low—too slow!"

11 Ringo Starr: Master of irony or is that someone else's jacket?

12 Pop open the Martinelli's! Funnyman Jerry Seinfeld heads off to girlfriend Shoshanna Lonstein's Sweet Sixteen.



7



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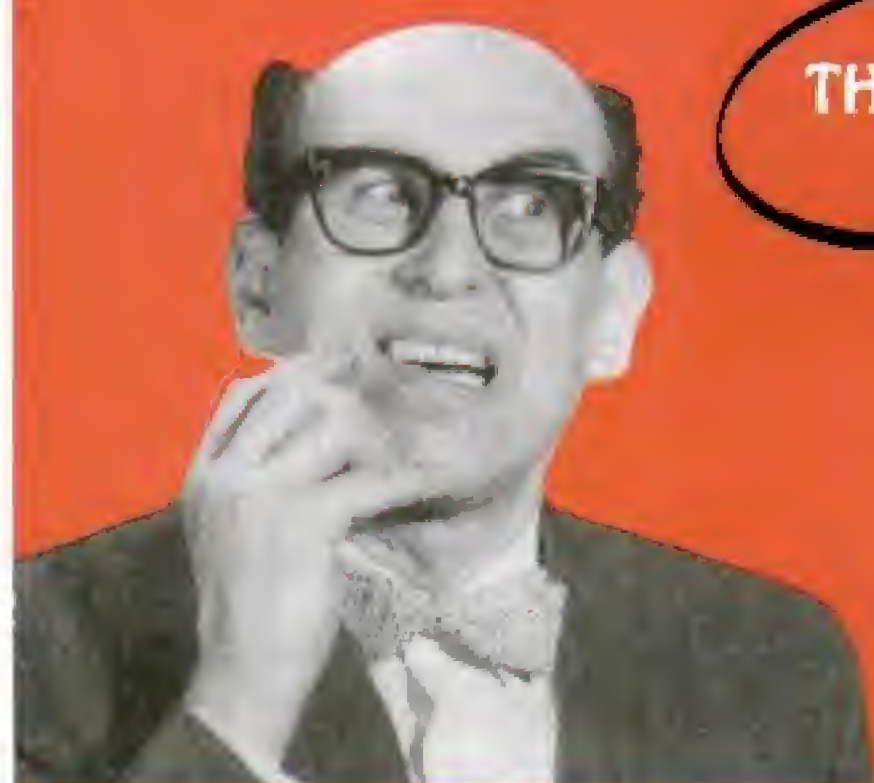




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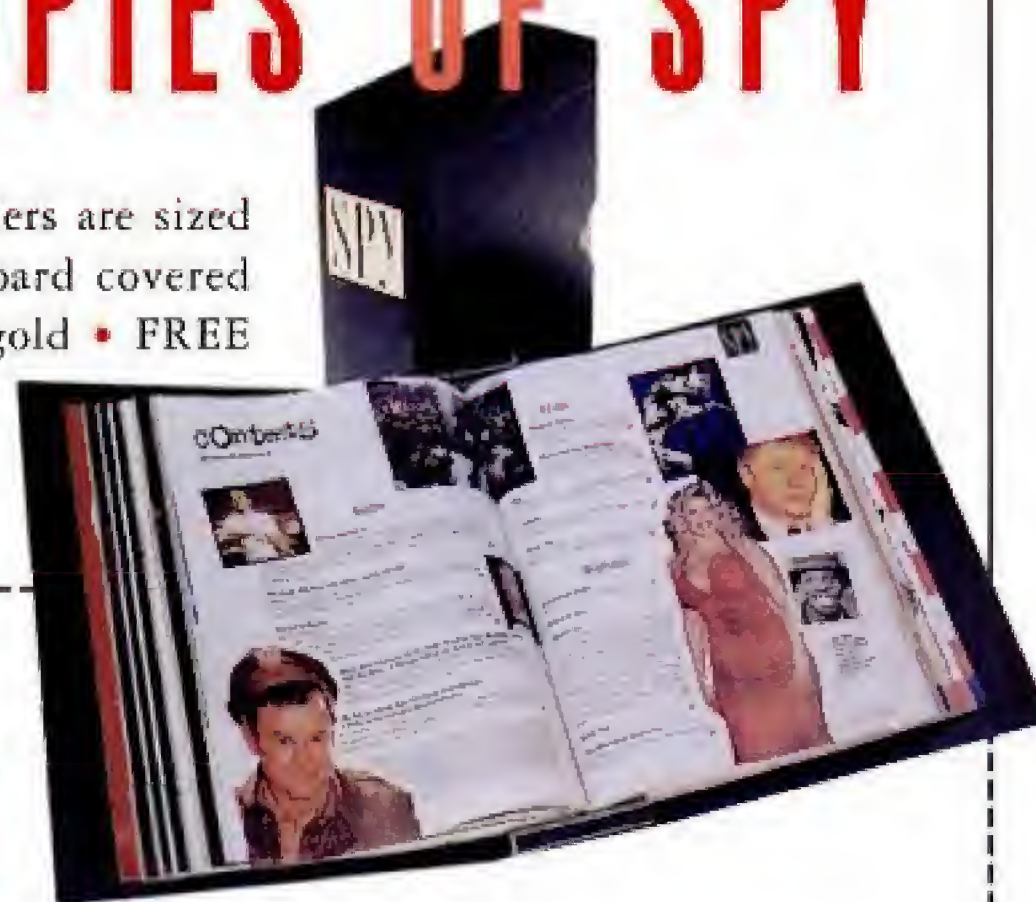
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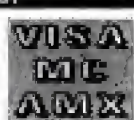
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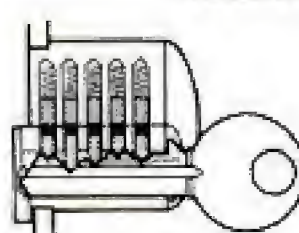
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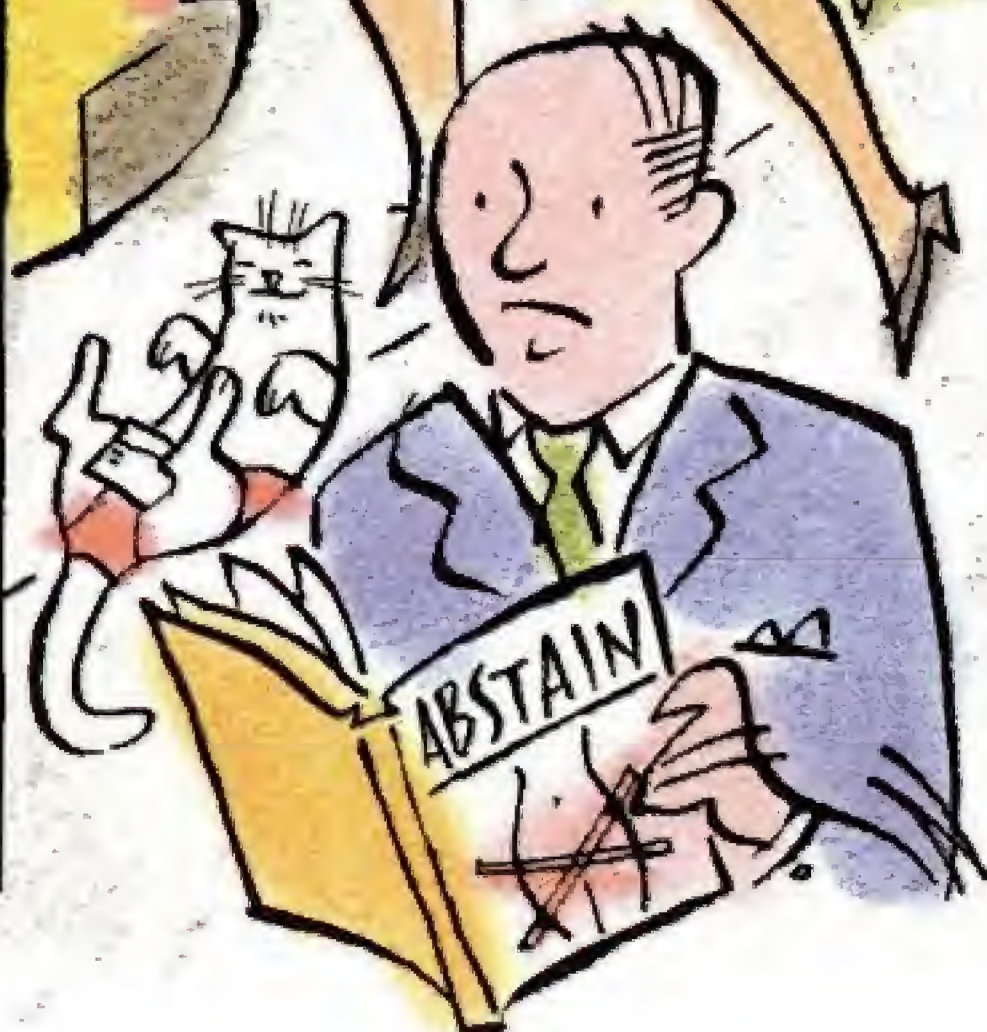
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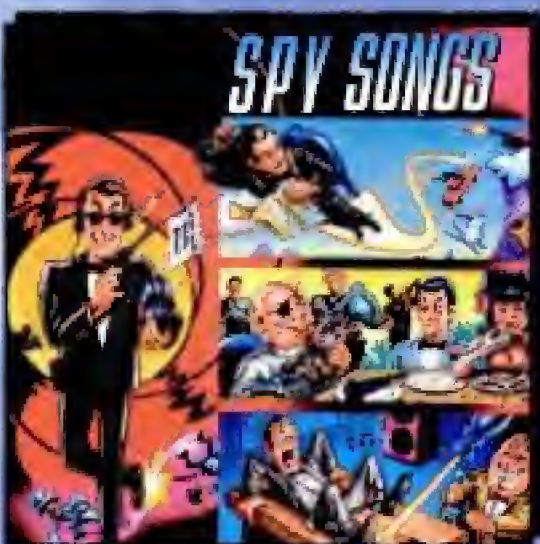
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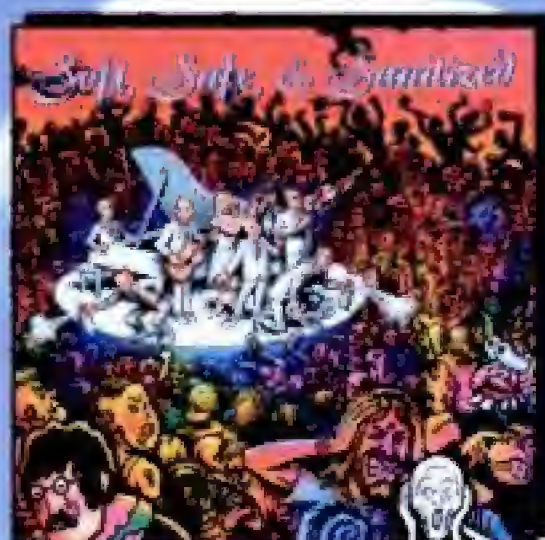
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